DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM FOR YOUNG CHILDREN FROM BIRTH THROUGH KINDERGARTEN

Michael Leon Mitchell

Bachelor of Arts, Wilberforce University, 1982
M.Div., Turner Theological Seminary, 1986

Mentors
Terry Thomas, D.Min.
Reginald Dawkins, D.Min.

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Date: _____

Approved:

_____

_____

Faculty Mentor(s):

_____

Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....v

DEDICATION.....vi

INTRODUCTION.....1

CHAPTER

1. MINISTRY FOCUS.....4
2. THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL.....23
3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION.....29
4. METHODOLOGY.....122
5. FIELD EXPERIENCE.....129
6. REFLECTION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....134

APPENDIX

A. AGES AND STAGES WORKSHOP.....138

B. PARENT'S JOURNAL.....141

C. AGES AND STAGES WORKSHOP.....145

D. PRE AND POST TEST QUESTIONAIRE.....148

E. PRE AND POST CHAPEL SERVICE SURVEY.....153

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....156

ABSTRACT

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The model is an early learning program created by St. Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church in Jacksonville, Florida to boost school readiness and ultimately improve graduation rates by integrating spiritual and academic components. This meets the biblical mandate of training God's children. The model begins by assessing the current levels of developmental functioning of students. Based on the results of pre-assessment data, appropriate strategies and learning plans were implemented by the church to ensure the students success. With careful guidance and support, students were able to complete each level of the early learning program functioning within and above normal limits.

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

First the writer would like to give thanks to Almighty God who has allowed him to make it thus far on his journey. Also, he is certainly appreciative and thankful for the Saint Stephen Church Family for their willingness to trust in the vision, which the Lord gave him. He thanks Dr. Terry Thomas and Dr. Ricky Woods who were his mentors when he entered United, for their guidance and support along the journey. The writer is also grateful for Dr. Reginald Dawkins who replaced Dr. Woods and added a special touch to the group. For the writer's professional associates, Dr. Rudolph McKissick who trusted the program enough to allow his two children to attend the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center. For Dr. David Green who helped the writer at a critical moment to hash out his project as he took notes on a napkin. The writer is grateful for Dr. James Ewers, an educator, for his motivation and skills and love for children. Certainly, for the writer's context associates, especially Cheryl Grant Parker, Charlene Taylor Hill, Rita Love and Atticus Taylor for their wisdom and determination to see him through. For Bishop Robert V. Webster, a true mentor, who continues to lead the writer on this journey. Finally, the writer gives thanks to his wife Cordelia and daughters, Courtney and Channing for just letting him know how proud they were when he entered the program.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated in memory of the writer's father, Reverend Arthur Lee Mitchell and his mother, Mrs. Mary Lee Mitchell, who were so proud of him and the call God has upon his life. Also, in memory of the writer's first wife, Denise Rena Mitchell, an educator, and his two children, Mickeyla and Michael, he is so grateful for each of you for your love and support. The writer also dedicates this project to the administration and staff of the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center for their untiring service and love for children.

INTRODUCTION

This project was researched and conducted by the Reverend Michael L. Mitchell, pastor of Saint Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church, Jacksonville, Florida. The researcher is an ordained Itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. As a child, Reverend Mitchell grew up in Jacksonville, where training and education of children was very important. His parents believed in Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Under the leadership of the researcher, the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center was created. The vision of the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center is born out of concern for our children and the desire to assist in making a brighter and prosperous future for them. Therefore, it is their goal to train every student in the knowledge of God and the Christian way of life and to give each child an excellent, well-rounded education. The school marks a return to the *old school* method of raising, teaching, and training our children. The school is building the foundation of successful learners—children who will develop into intelligent, respectable, productive assets to the future of the City of Jacksonville and the world.

Studies have shown that early experiences shape the way children will learn, think, and behave throughout their lives. The surroundings and relationships they encounter at an early age all play a key role in the person they will become. The Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center is designed to meet the needs of social, emotional,

and academic development in young children, while also instilling in them a strong foundation of Christian Education. The researcher believes children should be taught who they are in Christ, and how to be a Christian example in a world that does not fully accept Him as Lord.

In chapter one the researcher shares his personal journey along with how God used him to address the needs of the community. As part of his personal journey, the researcher reveals some devastating moments of his life and talk about those who helped him to be able to endure some of life's tragedies. This chapter reveals how the researcher was led to establish a childcare & learning center within his local context.

Chapter two is a discussion of the literary works the researcher used to explore the history of education within the world, church, as well as with African American children. The literary works deal with strategies and disciplines to prepare African American children for success.

Chapter three shares the historical, biblical, and theological foundations that support the beliefs and ideals of the researcher. The researcher establishes the importance of education within an historical context, with the intent to trace the formation of education in the United States and to examine the influence organized religion had on its development, particularly as it relates to African Americans. This chapter shares some of the heroes of the faith, who helped to educate Black children.

In chapter four, the researcher deals with the model used for ministry. The researcher explains the instruments, which would best address continued school improvement. This chapter shares how the students were exposed to character education lessons as well as coaching models and professional development for staff persons. The

researcher expresses his thoughts and beliefs on the role of all stakeholders involved in children's education.

Chapter five reflects on St. Stephen Child Care & Learning efforts to boost school readiness. Professional development opportunities were provided to the staff, which helped them to employ age appropriate strategies in the classroom settings. The result of academic performance is recorded. Pre and Post Term assessments were used to measure student's performance. Individual learning plans were developed and used as benchmarks to ensure students success. Environmental rating scales were used to assess the effectiveness of the center.

In chapter six, the researcher summarizes the entire project. The analysis and the results of the findings are recorded. The role of the Church and particularly the A. M. E. Church concerning the education of African American children is reiterated. This chapter ends with the researcher expressing his desire to continue to thrive to help make quality education possible for the church.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Growing up in a family and church environment where the training and education of children was very important. The ministry focus of the project researcher, Rev. Michael Leon Mitchell, is not only spiritual, but encompasses the social, economic, and educational concerns for the people in the community. It is out of this concern that the Lord blessed the researcher with the vision of establishing a school whereby young children, and their families could receive the educational foundation needed to prepare for the next level of learning. It is the desire of the project researcher to make a difference in the lives of all whom he comes in contact with.

The researcher was born in Perry, Florida, on August 4, 1960 to the late Reverend Arthur Lee Mitchell Sr. and the late Mrs. Mary Lee Mitchell. Whatever the family lacked in finances and material resources was overcompensated by the sense of love and connectedness that is still prevalent today. The researcher's early years were even more challenging as he was born with a crippling physical disability, club feet, that doctors diagnosed as irreparable. However, as fate would have it, an aunt who lived in Jacksonville, Florida heard of a local hospital that could assist the family in helping the researcher to overcome his impairment. She urged the family to move to Jacksonville. Arthur and Mary Mitchell, along with their eight children, uprooted themselves from the security of their familiar surroundings in hopes of a better life for the researcher.

After years of extensive physical therapy, and wearing metal leg braces, what doctors labeled as hopeless became a miracle when the researcher began to walk, unassisted at the age of seven. Over the next ten years, the researcher continued to grow stronger physically, although he endured periodic pain and discomfort through the eleventh grade. The hand of God was evident on his life, even then, and this favor coupled with a strong will and determination allowed the researcher to overcome his physical impairment. God fueled the researcher's development, as God also nurtured and built up the spiritual man inside of the child.

Reared in a Christian home, the researcher's parents instilled the principles of a Christian foundation that included life lessons about God and the need to trust God in every situation. The researcher's parents made sure he and his siblings were involved in the life and witness of the church. The family worshiped and was deeply rooted in a neighborhood African Methodist Episcopal Church; a denomination that would become the bedrock for the entire family for years to come. The researcher and his siblings were active in the youth department of the church and were greatly influenced by the pastor, Rev. Frank W. Jones, and other stalwarts of the church. As the researcher's Godly light began to shine, there were many within this church community who encouraged and supported his spiritual development as a youth in the church. This spiritual light began to shine at home and soon his siblings served as his congregation during his mock sermons in the backyard.

When asked to pray at church, instead of following the usual prayer assignments for youth participants, the researcher sought the advice of his father. His father advised him to allow the Holy Spirit to pray through him, and the researcher heeded his father's

wisdom, yielded to the Holy Spirit, and from that day a *prayer ministry* was born. The researcher began to pray often on programs and for services in and outside of his church. The researcher also attended early Sunday morning prayer meetings with his parents. The Morning Prayer sessions met each week at 6:00 a.m., moving from house to house. It was during this time that the researcher believes the Lord equipped him to answer His call to the ministry by allowing him to get his prayer life in order. The researcher's pastor, his father and mother and many others continued to aggressively encourage his spiritual development.

The researcher first realized that God had something unique planned for his life in 1976 despite facing youthful indiscretions. It was during this time that the researcher battled with a duplicitous lifestyle on a daily basis, despite having a deep desire to follow the will of God. The guilt and contradictions of his life and the choices he made would be the source of many internal struggles. It was not until a year later that His purpose was revealed. On his seventeenth birthday in 1977, the Lord began to deal with him about his life and his future. After literally wrestling all night with the Lord, His plans and purposes being revealed, and consultation and prayer with his pastor and father, the researcher accepted the call to ministry. On August 28, 1977, the researcher preached his trial sermon, "Who Is the Lord?" With one year of high school to complete, the researcher began his training and study under the guidance of the African Methodist Episcopal Church while he served as an associate minister at his home church.

In June 1978, the researcher graduated from high school and began preparations to enter the United States Army. It was his desire to go into the military first then attend college. Before his departure, he was invited to speak for the junior usher board

anniversary at Saint Stephen AME Church. Reverend Robert V. Webster, pastor at that time (now a retired Bishop in the AME Church), encouraged the researcher to attend college. With the assistance of Bishop Webster and his wife, Mrs. Carole Webster, the researcher was accepted into Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio. The opportunity to attend Wilberforce was yet another sacrifice for the researcher's parents, as they were struggling to support fourteen siblings. This, however, was a sacrifice the researcher's parents were willing to make in order to better equip the researcher academically. For the next four years, the researcher's parents looked forward to traveling to Ohio, every April to bring him home for the summer.

While attending Wilberforce, the researcher continued ministering at home during annual *Summer Revivals* at his church and other local churches. The researcher's father and other pastors gave him and other young ministers the opportunity to share God's Word whenever he came home on break. This gave the researcher the chance to connect with other young ministers and foster lasting relationships.

The researcher's education and spiritual development continued simultaneously. In 1979, he was ordained an itinerant deacon of the AME Church, and on November 8, 1981, he was ordained an itinerant elder. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in April 1982 from Wilberforce University. The researcher returned to Jacksonville to continue his ministry training and to get a job to save money for graduate school.

After spending a year in Jacksonville, the researcher was encouraged by his parents and Reverend Webster to stop working and return to school to continue his education. In 1983, he entered the Turner Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Eager to make up for lost

time; the researcher went to school year round and completed his course work for his degree in August 1985. The researcher received his Master of Divinity Degree in May 1986.

In the midst of his academic pursuits at Wilberforce, the researcher met the former Denise Rena Williams on August 20, 1979, who was a resident of Jacksonville, Florida. Their relationship was special from the start and by the end of that fall term the researcher knew that she was the woman he was to spend his life with. The courtship between the researcher and Denise lasted for five years and they were united in matrimony on July 28, 1984. Denise, an educator, brought much joy into the life of the researcher, but it was through Denise's witness that the researcher would learn how to trust God in the midst of adversity.

Over the course of the next eight years the researcher and Denise embraced the itinerancy of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. From the first pastoral assignment in 1985 in Jacksonville, they would move throughout the state of Florida with charges in Arcadia, Tampa, and Miami. The researcher's goal and desire was to take each church from where it was, at the time of his appointment, to where God wanted it to be.

Although the researcher's ministry and reputation as a pastor flourished during this time, his faith and strength would be tested tenfold. The researcher would have to put the spiritual teachings he learned in life into practice as he experienced suffering beyond measure. Over a period of five years, he would lose his father on August 25, 1987; his seven-month-old daughter, Mickeyla, on September 6, 1987; his six-month-old son, Michael II, on June 5, 1991; and his wife Denise, on October 26, 1992. In each instance, the researcher's heart would be filled with pain because of the love he shared with each

individual. Many would depict his life as that of a modern day Job, as it appeared he lost all that he had. But, like Job, the researcher did not curse God or turn away from God. In fact, the researcher's faith only strengthened. He persevered remembering the lessons his parents and others had taught him. Over the years, the researcher's faith has transcended to members of his congregations and others who know him. When he shares with others about suffering and the faithfulness of God, he speaks out of experience, which has helped many in the midst of their adversity. The researcher loves to share that God is no respecter of person, because what God has done for him, God is more than willing and able to do for others. One only has to trust God.

In September 1992, Bishop Frank C. Cummings appointed the researcher as pastor of Saint Stephen AME Church, Jacksonville, Florida where he is presently serving. Succeeding the 23-year tenure of Reverend Robert V. Webster, upon his election to the Episcopacy, the researcher and Denise were appointed to continue the legacy of such a great church. However, the researcher realized that God had another plan for his life when Denise went home to be with the Lord a month after receiving their new assignment. By the grace of God and the love and support of his new family at Saint Stephen, the researcher was able to move forward with a fresh, vibrant anointing that excited and ignited the members to a spiritual high. Since, September 1992, the researcher has been teaching and preaching the Gospel with revelation knowledge and a sincere determination to build a people who can stand, steadfast and unmovable, on the promises of God. His passion and concern for the personal spiritual growth of his members is a top priority. Like Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah, who led the Gold Coast

to independence from Great Britain, the researcher is sensitive to the conditions around him that he makes it his chief endeavor to improve those conditions for the good of all.

The lessons the researcher learned at home and during his days at Wilberforce and Turner Theological Seminary have helped him through his days of adversity. The researcher often reflects on his close relationship with his father and mother. He took joy in hearing his father say when presenting him to preach, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." The researcher always had a desire to be like his father, because he was a very skillful man and a devoted and loving husband and father. The researcher could always share his thoughts and concerns with his father and likewise his father with him. The researcher also shared a loving and strong relationship with his mother. She boldly took on the mantle as head of the family after the passing of her husband. When the researcher returned home to pastor St. Stephen, she left the family's church to stand by the side of her son. For nearly 15 years she would be his biggest supporter. The void of losing her on April 15, 2007 is still felt to this day.

The researcher believes that he serves a God who restores. During a Church school convention in June 1978, prior to his leaving for college, the researcher met and began to date the former Cordelia Daniel. Unfortunately, the relationship did not meet the challenges of the distance that separated them, and it ended after a few months. He fondly recalls receiving a *Dear Michael* letter from Cordelia, while at Wilberforce, ending their relationship. In 1995, after 17 years without contact, their paths crossed again. Believing that the Lord brought them back together, on September 27, 1997, the two were united in matrimony. Now the Mitchell team, which includes their two daughters, Courtney and

Channing, works diligently to carry out the mission and vision of the church. Cordelia's love and support for the researcher is a blessing to their lives and ministry.

Because of the researcher's appreciation for the importance of education, on August 2, 1999, the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center (CCLC) opened its doors to the community. The 1.7 million dollar project was a vision from God, implemented and nurtured by the researcher and enthusiastically supported by the church's membership. The reality of the CCLC is that it serves as a mean to help boost school readiness and it is also a catalyst for economic development in the inner-city neighborhood.

The researcher is a servant who is determined to trust God for a ministry of excellence and a servant leader for a church that meets the challenges of the 21st Century. After hearing a sermon by Sir Walter Mack during a chapel service at United Theological Seminary, the researcher now realizes that he was *Saved, To Tell The Story.*

Context

The African Methodist Episcopal Church, whose founders affirmed their humanity in the face of slavery and racism stands in defense of disadvantaged and oppressed peoples in the 21st century. "In November 1787, the colored people belonging to the Methodist Society in Philadelphia convened together in order to take into consideration the evils under which they labored arising from unkind treatment of their white brethren, who considered them a nuisance in the house of worship, and even pulled them off their knees while in the act of prayer and ordered them to the backseats. For these and various other acts of unchristian conduct, they considered it their duty to devise a plan in order build a house of their own in which they could worship God under their

own vine and fig tree. In this undertaking they met with great opposition from an elder of the Methodist Church (J. M. C.), who threatened that if they did not give up the building, erase their names from the subscription paper, and make acknowledgements for having attempted such a thing, that in three months they would all be publicly expelled from the Methodist Society. Not considering themselves bound to obey this injunction, and being fully satisfied that they would be treated without mercy, they sent in their resignations."[1]

From the origins of the Free African Society through the involvement of the AME clergy and lay in the Civil War of the 1860's and the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's, the AME Church has preached salvation from sin and deliverance from bondage. Whether in schools, seminaries, hospitals, or social service centers, the AME Church has lived the gospel outside its sanctuaries. This mandate still informs its ministry, vision, and mission in the Church's third century of existence.

> According to *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2008,* the mission of the AME Church is to minister to the social, spiritual, and physical development of all people. At every level of the Connection and in every local church, the AME Church shall engage in carrying out the spirit of the original Free African Society, out of which the AME Church evolved: that is to seek out and save the lost, and serve the needy. The ultimate purposes of the body of Christ are: to make available God's biblical principles; to spread Christ's liberating gospel, and provide continuing programs which will enhance the entire social development of all people.[2]

The leadership of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is comprised of twenty-one active Bishops and twelve general officers. The 11th Episcopal district,

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[1]*The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2008*, ([Nashville, TN: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2009), 5.

[2]Ibid., 16.

comprised of the state of Florida and the Bahamas, has over 500 churches. The researcher is privileged to be a part of the 11th Episcopal District and serves as the pastor of Saint Stephen A M E Church, Jacksonville, Florida in his local context. With a membership of 1,200 plus members, Saint Stephen is one of the largest AME Churches in the city of Jacksonville.

The city of Jacksonville was founded in 1822. It is located in the northeast section of the state of Florida and is geographically and culturally closer to the smaller cities near the Georgia state line, than its larger, sister cities in south and central Florida. Jacksonville is a city with deep southern roots and traditions.

Jacksonville is the largest city within the northeast Florida Metropolitan Statistical Area and is surrounded by Baker, Nassau, St. Johns and Clay counties. Jacksonville has had a consolidated government since 1968. Under this plan, Duval County encompasses all of Jacksonville, making it one of the largest cities in square miles (773.3) in the contiguous U.S. (Florida Statistical Abstract, 2006). According to the 2000 Census, Jacksonville had a population of 798,556: white (531,235) Black (217,121), Hispanic (32,390), Asian (21,423), Hawaiian (489), Indian (2,636), other (10,250), Male (387,604), Female (410,952), Households (336,630), Average Household Size (2.52), Average House Value ($96,198), and the Average Household Income ($41,769).

Saint Stephen was founded in 1892 and although the current structure was built in 1961, the church still sits on the original sight of its founding. Saint Stephen AME Church has been a witness to the goodness of God's mercy, love and grace since its humble bush harbor beginnings to the multi-million dollar church that it is today. From its inception, Saint Stephen has been engaged in carrying out the mission of the African

Methodist Episcopal Church. The church has been engaged in the higher calling of salvation, promoting social and economic enterprises and championing the causes of peace and equality for all people.

The stability of Saint Stephen can be attributed to the fact that it has always been a church of families and the longevity of its pasturage. Over the past fifty-three years, three pastors have served Saint Stephen. This has greatly aided in the church's growth and development, spiritually, physically, and financially. Saint Stephen is proud to have two former pastors elected and consecrated as Bishops in the AME Church, the late Bishop Abraham Gibbs (1948) and retired Bishop Robert Vaughn Webster (1992). Descendants of both are among the membership today. The church's stability is a testament to the importance of families in the life and witness of a church. Many of the congregants can trace their ancestry to the early days of the church's history. Multiple generations serve in various ministries of the church whether as members of the same choir or usher board or following in the footsteps of parents or grandparents. As newer members have joined in Christian fellowship, the tradition of instilling strong Christian family values is evident within the congregation.

The researcher believes for a church to continue to grow, it must have a prepared generation to assume roles. Saint Stephen has been actively engaged in training its young members in various aspects of the life of the church since the early days of its formation. Throughout the life of the church, the young people are learning the importance of being of service to humanity in accordance with the commandments of our Lord and Savior. The church has taken a holistic approach to assisting its youth in developing the skills necessary to succeed along life's journey. In 1932, the church registered a troop with the

Boy Scouts of America. In 1946, the first Girl Scout Troops were registered serving girls from six-eighteen years of age. Both organizations have proven track records of instilling values of service to God and country and improving the academic performance of the boys and girls they serve. The church continued to demonstrate its commitment to the spiritual development of its youth and in 1947, it was decided that the Sunday school, Allen Christian Endeavor League members and youth choirs would be assigned to serve during the third Sunday worship service. This is a tradition that continues to this day.

When the current edifice was dedicated in 1961, the following statement was included in the souvenir journal: "They [the pastor and members] think of this building in terms of religious training for all, character building for the youth and a house of prayer for all people." As early as 1969, the church began the tradition of making a financial contribution to high school graduating seniors. One such financial award was given to a student who returned the donation and asked that the church establish a scholarship fund to help other students in need of financial assistance.

By 1979, the church was organized into Episcopal District Clubs; one for each elected and consecrated Bishop in the AME Church. The purpose of the committees, was to acquaint the membership with those worthy of being recognized, emulated and for benevolent causes. The Frank Curtis Cummings Episcopal Committee was specifically charged with aiding college students in their academic pursuits. It was in 1990 that the Scholastic Achievement Committee (SAC) was organized to recognize students for their academic accomplishments and to provide financial support while attending college. Expanding on its original purpose, the SAC provided tutorial services to students in order

to improve their academic accomplishments and testing skills in preparation for the required statewide FCAT.

Retired and active educators served as tutors. While the young people are being prepared, our seasoned members are still making valuable contributions to the church through their involvement in various ministries of the church, including the Senior Adult Ministry, Sunday school, members of the Women's Missionary Society, the Sons of Allen and the Lay Organization.

Moving beyond the walls, St. Stephen has been historically the center of action for peace and equality. For years during the Civil Rights Movement, the church served as a safe haven for meetings of the local branch of the NAACP. It has been actively involved in voter's registration and is an official voter's precinct. It is the spiritual home of the first African-American to be elected Sheriff in Florida since Reconstruction and has had among its members, the first African American elected officials to the City Council and Florida State of Representatives and Senate. Saint Stephen's legacy is grounded in its obedience to God's Word, its service to the community and commitment to the tradition of the AME Church. Longevity, stability, dedication and commitment . . . these words characterize the family that is Saint Stephen.

Rich in historical significance, Saint Stephen is a predominantly African American inner city, urban congregation on the outskirts of downtown Jacksonville. In its prime, the area surrounding Saint Stephen consisted of single-family homes, housing projects and rental properties. African Americans primarily owned many of the small businesses located in the community. Consistent with trends in housing, as a result of racial integration, the community changed. Saint Stephen now serves a community that

falls in the lower socio-economic level. Adjacent to the church property are housing complexes for low-income senior citizens and low income single and multi-families. The elementary and junior high schools that once educated children in the neighborhood schools have evolved into magnet schools, serving students who are transported in to attend academically stringent programs. As a result, more than 75% of the church's membership resides in outlying areas with most traveling 10-15 miles to the church. According to the 2000 Census report Saint Stephen is located in the 32209 zip code. The population is 39,653: White (388), Black (38,857), Hispanic (281), Asian (22), Hawaiian (8), Indian (47), Other (79), Male (17,612), Female (22,041), Households (17,526), Average Household Size (2.58), Average House Value ($48,400) and Average Household Income ($22,202).

The researcher was assigned as pastor of Saint Stephen AME Church in September 1992. He was able to build on the legacy of those who preceded him.

The researcher's concern for the people is not only spiritual, but also encompassed the social, economic, and educational needs of the community. It is out of this concern that the Lord blessed the researcher with the vision of establishing a school whereby pre-school age children (six months to five years) could receive the educational foundation needed to prepare them for the next level of learning. Research shows that providing a high quality education for children before they turn five years of age yields long-term benefits, including economic stability and a deterrent to criminal activity. When families are involved in their children's early childhood education, children may experience greater success once they enter elementary school. Through much prayer and the enthusiastic willingness of the congregants, in 1999, the Saint Stephen Child Care &

Learning Center (CCLC), a 16,800 sq. ft. state of the art facility, opened its doors to the community. The CCLC is academically recognized and serves as a beacon of hope to many families by assisting them in creating a brighter and prosperous future for their children. The church considers it a joy and privilege to provide a quality-learning environment for the children we serve. It is their belief that every child should have a safe environment in which to grow and learn while parents are at work, school, or engaged in activities that take them away from the home and their children. In addition to their daily academic and Christian education regimen, training opportunities are also available for the parents and guardians. The parent is the child's first teacher and Saint Stephen is committed to maintaining their parents' primary role in meeting this need.

The church offers a comprehensive curriculum through administrators and faculty whose stated goals are to ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are employed. Children are taught *how to learn* not just what to learn.

This school has and continues to be a premier Learning Center in the city of Jacksonville. The students are able to transition into public or private educational institutions; functioning at the highest level of academic performance. Consequently, the ability of our students to compete and maintain high academic performances have afforded them the opportunity to gain entry into the academically challenging and selective magnet programs offered by Jacksonville's public school district.

Because of the high academic standards of CCLC and its student's performance in the public and private educational institutions, they were extended an invitation to participate in a partnership program with the Early Learning Coalition of Duval, the Jacksonville Journey. The Jacksonville Journey was initiated in September 2008 and was

designed to combat escalating crime in Jacksonville by: (1) increasing police presence and eliminating crime, (2) assisting ex-offenders in building job skills and becoming responsible community members, and (3) keeping children safe and productive, particularly after school and in the summer. Funding provided by this initiative is also invested in improving children's early literacy and school readiness through the *Jacksonville Journey Early Learning Program (ELP.)*

The Jacksonville Journey, through the ELP, recommended more child-care centers go through the Guiding Stars Program. This program focuses on the environment in which children learn and evaluates centers across five domains: the learning environment, staff qualifications and professional development, ratio and group size, curriculum, and program operations (family and staff administration). Coaches help the teachers work with students in a more structured, meaningful way, and experts screen for emotional and social development issues. If necessary, families are connected to the Child Guidance Center for mental health services.

Teaching staff members of CCLC also receive opportunities to enhance their education by taking classes via scholarships that are offered through this program. Following an extensive review of this project, as well as our continued effort to maintain high standards, we agreed to participate and thus our reputation as a premier learning center has been validated by the Guiding Stars of Duval County, an accomplishment for which they are thankful to God.

The establishment of the Child Care & Learning Center is a catalyst for boosting school readiness and for economic development in the inner-city neighborhood. It provides not only an opportunity for learning for the children but also jobs for the

community, which helps Saint Stephen, carry out the mission of the Church. Under the leadership of the researcher, the church has increased it real estate's holding.

The researcher and the membership are excited about the implementation of future projects and ministries that will reach out and touch the hearts and souls of the people and change their lives for the better.

Synergy

There is a high school dropout epidemic in America. Growing national, state and local attention has been paid to high school graduation rates and the disparities between Black and white and Hispanic and white students. Each year in the U.S., almost one third of all public high school students, fail to graduate with their class.[3]

The decision to drop out is a dangerous one for students. According to the Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI) report, (Eliminating the Achievement Gap, Summer 2004) "dropping out of school affects students throughout their lives. Of the Duval County dropouts in 2002, 21 percent continued their education and 22 percent were employed the following year."

Dropouts are much more likely than their peers who graduate to be unemployed, live in poverty, receive public assistance, be imprisoned, be on death row, be unhealthy, divorced, and be single parents with children who drop out from high school themselves.[4]

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[3]Mishel, Lawrence and Joydeep Roy. *Rethinking High School Graduation Rates and Trends*. (Washington D.C.: Economic Policy Institute, 2006), 67

[4]John M. Bridgeland, John J. Dilulio, and Karen Burke Morrison, *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts*, Civic Enterprises, LLC. (assessed December 11, 2010).

Saint Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church is a landmark in the city of Jacksonville, with a rich history that spans over 120 years. We are committed to the spiritual, physical, and economic development of the surrounding area. It is our mission to be an effective instrument of service to the people of God, the community, and the city.

Studies have shown that early experiences shape the way children will learn, think, and behave throughout their lives. The surroundings and relationships they encounter at an early age play a key role in the person they will become. The Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center is designed to meet the needs of social, emotional, and academic development in our young children, while instilling in them a strong sense of foundation of Christian Education. We must teach our children who they are in Christ, and how to be a Christian example in a world that does not fully accept Him as Lord.

The King James Version of the Bible, Proverbs 22:6 say: "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." The vision of the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center is one born out of concern for children and the desire to assist in making a brighter and prosperous future for them. It is the church's goal to train every student in the knowledge of God, the Christian way of life, and give each child an excellent, well-rounded education.

The researcher's vision for the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center is for the Center to offer a comprehensive curriculum with administrators and faculty whose goal is to provide a comfortable, loving, and safe environment where children have quality and innovative learning experiences. Children are taught the skills of how to learn not just what to learn.

The Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center marks a return to the old school method of rearing, teaching, and training our children. We are building the foundation of successful learners—children who will develop into intelligent, respectable, productive assets to the future of the City of Jacksonville and the world.

The researcher believes that children who are successful academically are more likely to graduate from high school, attend college, be fully employed, earn higher incomes, and in general, lead healthier more productive lives. Once an achievement gap begins early in life it is difficult to reverse.

Literacy is the foundation for all future learning. Indeed, "no educational achievement is of greater concern to parents, children, and the general public than a child learning to read and write."

Quality early education is pivotal to a child's academic success in elementary, middle, and high school. As noted in a 1998 study conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, a child's school readiness at age three is directly proportional to the quality of childcare received by the child. While this statement is somewhat linked to the "you get what you pay for" philosophy, it is important to remember that middle-class and wealthier families have access to an array of early education centers and options in the community, but low-income families struggle to pay for the most basic forms of child care. Therefore, Saint Stephen's CCLC attempts to provide a quality education for all children, regardless if they receive public assistance through the Jacksonville Children Commission or some other agency. By teaching children at an early age, we believe this will help alleviate many of the challenges we face in our community.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN MINISTRY

The African American church has always taken a role in educating African American children. The African Methodist Episcopal Church in particular has always stood at the forefront when it came to down to making sure people are able to receive an education.

Bishop John Hurst Adams in the book entitled, *What A.M.E.'s Believe,* shares history, and instructions on the beliefs of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Adams gives helpful insight on the subjects of education, Christian education, spiritual formation, and charity vs. justice.

Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, in *Transformational Leadership* is significant because it allows the serious (who?), to explore insights based on research that shows how beneficial individual transformation and empowerment is to a church or unit. The book is also important because it suggests that transformational leadership is based on mutuality. That is, the leader responds to the individuals needs at all levels to help them exceed expected performances and expectations for continued success.

Barbara Bateman in Elements *of Successful Teaching* discusses the concern for the criticism of our schools being an all-time high. The common complaint is that the objectives of education need to be more precisely defined. In this book, Bateman provides research-based scientifically sound instructional sequence known as OTTER –

that detail best practices in a concise and practical fashion: Objectives, Task Analysis, Teach, Evaluate and Recycle or rejoice.

Bishop Rudine Sims gives insight and an overview of the reviews of the life of Daniel A. Payne in the book entitled *Daniel A. Payne, Great Black Leader*. Bishop tells of the sacrifice and contributions made by Daniel Payne towards education, the church, and the African American Community. It shares the struggles of Daniel Payne and African Americans and their ability to overcome through Education. Bishop Payne did not allow anything to shake his faith or deny him the pursuit to be an educator and liberator.

Elizabeth F. Caldwell in *Making a Home for Faith: Nurturing the Spiritual Life of Your Children* proposes that pastors and churches often assume parents have created a spiritual plan at home for their family. She provides for the reader insights and ideas for parents and educators to nurture the faith of children. She goes one step further by offering parents ideas to create a home environment to reinforce faith growth.

M. Diefendorf, M., & C. Goode, in *The Long-Term Economic Benefits of High Quality Early Childhood Intervention Programs* offers an extensive body of research which indicates that high quality early intervention for at-risk infants, toddlers and young children and their families is a sound economic investment. Studies have found a number of long-term cost savings in terms of decreased grade repetition, reduced special education spending, enhanced productivity, lower welfare costs, increased tax revenues, and lower juvenile justice costs.

Millard J. Erickson, in the book, *Christian Theology*, gives a presentation of Christian doctrine on the basis of Scripture. This book gives an account of critical

historical exegesis. It helps students understand the concept of religion in history. The author relates Christian theology to Christian living and Christian ministry in today's world. He also addresses revelation in history, revelation through history and revelation as history.

Floyd H. Flake Elaine McCollins Flake and Edwin C. Reed in their book the *African American Church Management Handbook* share a model for ministry in the African American Church and community. The book shares strategies for success. The book cautions, encourages, enlightens, and equips leaders in the areas of management and restoring a community.

Franklin E. Frazier and Anthony M. Plat, in their work, *The Negro Family in the United States*, provide an understanding of the processes of family adjustment and change. The book reveals wide variations in the standards of different social classes. The African American or Negro family suffers when there are no morals and values within a community. A lack of morals and values within a community lead to crime and other forms of antisocial behavior.

B. Fuller, J. Gasko, and R. Anguiano, in *Lifting Pre-K Quality: Caring and Effective Teachers* focuses on helping pre-K teachers develop skills that matter for early learning. The researchers identified mentoring and training for preschool teachers as important tools to help them enrich their instructional activities in classrooms and boost the early language and pre-literacy skills of three and four year-olds.

Eric Geiger, Michael Kelly and Philip Nation in *Transformational Discipleship: How People Really Grow* is a research-based book informing church leaders who are serious about the spiritual growth of their members, to explore how individuals grow

spiritually. They provide for the reader a plethora of ideas on how individuals grow spiritually through intentional efforts on the part of both leaders and church members.

E. D. Hirsch in *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them* offers a powerful, compelling, and unassailable argument for reforming America's schooling methods and ideas. It is a passionate and thoughtful book that details the necessity of traditional teaching wherein factual knowledge is prerequisite to truce critical thinking and other higher-level learning.

Jawanza Kunjufu in his books, *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys,* clearly shows that African American parents, teachers, administrators, business people and all other members of the community are part of the conspiracy. He believes that everyone should have a role and a responsibility in countering the conditions that are destroying our youth and consequently our future.

Paul G. Leavenworth in this workbook, *Finishing Well: Life, Leadership, and Legacy,* shares with the Christian leaders' insights from the Bible to facilitate transformational learning. The author relies on Apostle Paul's declaration in 2 Timothy 4: 7 when he says, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." He believes the reader like Paul can finish well by learning to appropriate the resources and model of Jesus Christ who completed or finished for us.

David Lynn and Kathy Lynn in *Home Growth Faith* is a research-based book and practical guide written to encourage and teach parents and church leaders how to intentionally shape the spiritual lives of their children on a daily basis. The book's usefulness is that it provides faith activities parents and educators can use such as prayer, devotions, family fun and faith conversation for the home and church.

Susan Neuman and Kathleen Roskos in *Nurturing Knowledge* emphasizes the importance of building a foundation for school success by linking early literacy to math, science, art and social studies. These authors note the standards and demonstrate exactly how to reach them through play, student-generated interest, and organized instruction. They also emphasize the importance of a teaching curriculum that is not based on lofty, untried theories or idealized classrooms. Instead, it comes from real-life teachers and their students.

A. J. Reynolds, J. A. Temple, B. A. White, and D. L. Robertson in *Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Child-Parent Center Early Education Program is a* research, which shows the advantages of children who attended an intensive preschool and family support program. These children attained higher educational levels, were more likely to be employed, and less likely to have problems with the legal system than were peers who did not attend the program, according to a study funded by the Child Parent Center (CPC).

D. Strickland and Ayers Riley write in *Early Literacy: Policy and Practice in the Preschool Years 2006* a report by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), Rutgers University describing how early childhood professionals have long recognized the importance of language and literacy in preparing children to succeed in school. Early literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of early learning experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention (?), higher graduation rates, and enhanced productivity in adult life. This report synthesizes the body of professional knowledge about early literacy and offers research-based recommendations.

Tony Wagner in Making *the Grade* offers a blueprint for communities to follow as they prepare to confront the difficult and complex issues of school improvement. He challenges us to help create the foundation for schools that work for students, to be able to describe what good schools look like and how do they involve parents and motivate students and teachers to do their best.

Wendy M. Wigger, in *Seasons of a Family's Life: Cultivating the Contemplative Spirit at Home* looks at spiritual disciplines and traditions of every day human life to give the reader an insightful model of spiritual awareness to help families integrate spiritual practices into their daily lives. The emphasis is on family life as a context for nurturing contemplative practices in the home.

Amos N. Wilson, in the book, *The Developmental Psychology of the Black Child*, shares some of the things that help to shape children even before they are born. The author talks about the diet of the mother that carries the child and how that affects the brain and the children's ability to learn.

Karen M. Yust and Eugene C. Roehlke in *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives* to encourage parents to create a home environment for spiritual growth. The significance of this book is that it places an emphasis on faith. The authors believe faith practice by parents in the home is important because childhood is the point where their children's spiritual journey begins and their lives are nurtured and sustained.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The question before us is how can we boost school readiness and ultimately improve graduation rates; increase adult earnings and lower crime rates? One approach is to create a preschool program to show how effective early learning can help children develop foundations necessary to become life-long learners.

The focus of this section is to establish the theoretical foundation for this project. This theoretical foundation was implemented through a learning program, which was created through the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center. The program was created for children ages six weeks through kindergarten for a nine-month period.

The researcher preached sermons and conducted workshops that showed the importance of education and team building. The church took on the responsibility of volunteering in the classroom, kitchen, and office of the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center.

Biblical Foundation

This section will provide a biblical foundation for developing an early learning program for young children beginning at birth. Even though there are many scriptures which illustrates the importance of teaching children at an early age, the researcher has decided to focus his attention first, on an Old Testament passage found in Deuteronomy

4:5-10 and then show how it relates to selected texts from the New Testament, namely 2 Timothy 1:5-6, 11; 3:14-15, 17, in support of developing an effective early learning program for young children birth through kindergarten (infancy to five years of age).

The passage from Deuteronomy 4:5-10 will constitute the central focus with an abridged integration of the 2 Timothy references, in an effort to show the continuity of this adherence across both the historical and cultural transitions in early Jewish society. The principle concern for this hermeneutical exploration will be to observe the practice of teaching members of the ancient Hebrew community, the spiritual, and theological basis that endorses the significance of education at the earliest stages of life. Using a critical approach toward the chosen texts it will be demonstrated that the foundation for providing effective early learning for a developing child from infancy through pre-elementary education was introduced at the opening of the Judeo-Christian canon.

Old Testament Foundation

> Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me that you should act according to them in the land, which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren, especially concerning the day you stood before the Lord your God in Horeb, when the Lord said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.[1]

[1]Dt 4: 5-10 (NKJV).

Historical Context

The Title and Canonical Positioning: The first two words in the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy, *'elleh haddeārîm*, comprised the title that the Jews most commonly used for this book. The post-biblical Hebrew rendering means *these are the words*. The title was sometimes given in a shortened form as simply *deārîm* (Words). The name Deuteronomy is an English rendering of the Latin Vulgate's title *Deuteronomium, second law*. This title came from the Greek/Septuagint (LXX) translation *(Deuteronomion)* of the Hebrew phrase meaning *a copy of this law* (Dt17:18). Canonically it appears in both the Hebrew and modern Bibles as the fifth book of the Hebraic Law or the Pentateuch, which includes the five books of Moses commencing the Old Testament.[2]

The Date and Subject Matter: The literary nature of Deuteronomy is difficult to define. The book's archaic character has captured the attention of an increasing number of scholars who prefer to assign it to a period overlapping the writings of Samuel, the Judges and the rise of the monarchical age. Various criticisms have attempted to identify the book or portions of it as *the book of the law* found in the temple during the reign of Josiah (c. 640-609 BC), largely due to the close similarity between the Deuteronomic legislation and the religious reform that followed chiefly the insistence on one central sanctuary (Dt 12:1-7; 2 Kgs 23:8ff.). This finding, however, was met with suspicious opposition that regarded it as serving only to authenticate the reform; thus accurately situating the date of origin. Needless to say, the preceding view was not too popular and

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[2]Matthew Black, and Harold H. Rowley, *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (Edinburgh, UK: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1977), 269.

many scholars regard Deuteronomy as a blueprint for a previous reform during Hezekiah's reign (c. 728-716 BC) or of a more dismal period of Manasseh's rule (c. 687-642 BC).[3] Nevertheless, placing Deuteronomy within the seventh century or prior remains problematic in that some arguments, focusing purely on linguistic features, position the book either toward the end of the Babylonian Exile or possibly a post-exilic work. With such a plethora of opinions common agreement recognizes the book's composition as involving a prolonged development originating from the northern tradition and most likely belongs to the mid-sixth century BC.[4]

Firmly dating the book within the 6th century seems to have the strongest support, however, with a tilt toward the traditional perspective on its derivation. As G. E. Wright states, "in its final form probably in the sixth century BC...any investigation into the origin of Deuteronomy, however, will lead ultimately to the figure of Moses himself. Though it cannot be proved, it is nevertheless not improbable that the book rests on the tradition of an actual address of Moses before his death."[5]

Even though it cannot be proven that Moses is the author of the book of Deuteronomy, the researcher supports this book being written by Moses because the book itself claims to be written by Moses. Deuteronomy 1:1 states, "these be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab." Deuteronomy 31:24

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[3]Raymond Edward Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland Edmund Murphy, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary,* Volumes 1-2 (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968), 101.

[4]Ibid., 101-10.

[5]G. E. Wright, "The Book of Deuteronomy: Introduction and Exegesis," *The Interpreter's Bible*, VOL. II. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1953), 314, 326.

states "and it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished."

In Matthew 4:4, 7,10 Jesus Christ Himself attributed the book of Deuteronomy to Moses and even quoted Deuteronomy as the Word of God in resisting the temptation of Satan. Matthew 19:7-8 states "they say unto Him, Why Moses then commanded to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He said unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."[6]

The New Testament quotes or alludes to Moses authorship of Deuteronomy over one hundred times. Acts 3:22, states, "for Moses truly said unto the fathers. A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." 1 Corinthian 9:9 states, "For it is written in the Law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?"

Contextual Milieu: In the opening scene the people of Israel have arrived at the Plains of Moab near the border of the Promised Land and are preparing for their entrance into Canaan. It is there that Moses commences to address Israel by delivering several speeches, supplemented by additions and addendums, comprising the book of Deuteronomy. The speeches mainly consist of reminiscences, sacred narratives, anticipatory legislation, preached law, songs, blessings, appeals, admonitions, and threats, along with historical traditions and notices.[7] On the surface, Moses directs his address to

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[6]Mt 17:7-8.

[7]Black and Rowley, 269.

the generation of Israel gathered on the plains of Moab. These Israelites were the children of those who had been present at Mt. Sinai. With the passing of Moses, that earlier generation, with the exceptions of Joshua and Caleb, came to an end. Moses spoke to a generation that had not participated in the covenant making at Sinai/Horeb. They needed to hear the substance of the covenant, to learn how to apply it, and to be encouraged to obedience.[8]

Essentially, Deuteronomy may be characterized as a legalistic text with an opening address containing an introduction (hap. 1:1-4:43) followed by a conclusion (29:1-30:20) that is expanded by an assortment of homiletically and poetically infused script. It also shares a close resemblance to the book of Exodus in basic structure and style absent of the extended sections that contain certain stipulations and rubrics of the post-exilic Priestly editors[9]

The apparent distinction that can be made for Deuteronomy in relation to its neighbor Exodus, or other legalistic books, is that typically God is the prevalent speaker. However, in this case it is Moses doing the talking. Interestingly this role is credited to him regardless of the traditionally held claim that he was an ineffective communicator. The three addresses that Moses makes to the people reflect a uniform preaching style marked by a variety of distinctive words and phrases revealing an affinity with the Elohist branch of the Law or Torah, in addition to the preaching styles of the prophets

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[8]Mark E. Biddle, *Smyth & Helwys, Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2003), 7.

[9]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy1968,102. Wellhausen, Julius, *Prolegomena to the History of Israe*l, (n.p. : n.d., 1878, 1883) Theory widely known as the *Documentary Hypothesis* claimed that the Torah (the Five Books of Moses) was derived from originally independent, parallel and complete narratives, which were subsequently combined into the current form by a series of redactors.

Hosea and more particularly Jeremiah.[10] Deeper philological investigations regarding the preaching method of the book connects it to the Deuteronomist tradition consisting of an independent use and theology common to a northern sanctuary surrounding. Evidence supporting Deuteronomist's distinction from other biblical legal codes is probably less a matter of chronology but more of separated geography, documenting what occurred at sanctuaries in a variety of locations. Therefore, it is more beneficial to consider Deuteronomist as the initial composition of the material extending from Deuteronomy to 2 Kings as opposed to the final text of the Torah. Consequently in as much as Genesis to Numbers encompasses the Priestly 'Bible', so likewise the Deuteronomist 'Bible' consists of Deuteronomy to 2 Kings, with Deuteronomy being the introductory portion of this body of work.[11]

Theological Application

Despite its homiletically expanded rendering of the law, Deuteronomy is profoundly theological; perhaps more so than any other Old Testament book. Principally, the book seeks to reveal whether the covenantal faith of Israel, conceived in the wilderness, is suited for a potentially more developed and prosperous existence among the Canaanites.

> It is thus the evaluation of a social, military and political transition from nomadism to agrarianism juxtaposed with a theistic faith...the immediate, even if only temporary, cost of progress is idolatry and ultimately becomes ... the diagnosis and evaluation of idolatry, and it is that because Deuteronomy is also completely theocentric as shown in 10: 12-22. The Word(s) is delivered liturgically to Israel, *qĕhal* Yahweh [cf. Chap. 23], which will subsequently be called the *ekklēsia tou theou* of the New Covenant. The moral demand required of

[10]Black and Rowley, 269.

[11]Ibid., 270.

> the covenant community is considered within this theology of encounter and as part of the total self-revelation and self-giving of the covenant God and the resultant human response.[12]

The book should therefore not be spoken of as merely a legalistic exposition of the covenant community's faith but also as an illumination of Jesus' mission who in the temptation narrative(s) quoted from it three times and who himself earned the prophetic distinction as the new Moses. In essence, it brings to mind the expression found in John's Gospel chapter 1:14a, "The Word became flesh, and made his dwelling among us." Since the concise name for the book is *Words*, John appears to connect the dots initiated by the author(s) of Deuteronomy roughly seven centuries earlier that had already laid the visionary groundwork for such a bold theological claim. Biblical preachers from very different eras have now bequeathed the new covenant community of faith, a perpetual source of God's self-revelation to the Christian preacher in his/her contemporary tasks of educating God's people for this emergent land of technological promise. It is necessary at this point to bring to a close further elucidation on the theological relevance of the book since that area will be given an exhaustive look in the succeeding sections of this topic.

Literary Context of Deuteronomy 4:5-10

In the words of Richard D. Nelson, "Chapter 4 forms a bridge between the historical review of chapters 1-3 and the start of Moses' promulgation of law in 5:1.[13] Moses generally uses direct discourse elsewhere, however, Robert Polzin claims, "But in chapter 4 employs indirect discourse.... Deuteronomy 4:1-40 serves as a summary

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[12]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 102.

[13]Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*, OTL, vol. 5 (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2002), 61.

analysis of this speech...an analytical, evaluative response to that past by means of indicating its full significance for his audience's subsequent history in the land and in exile."[14] Deuteronomy 4 belongs to the Opening Address delivered by Moses and contains, along with practical and theocentric exhortations, an account of events from Sinai to Moab.

According to J. G. Millar "Moab is presented as the place where the past and future of Israel coalesce in a single moment, the place where the decision to follow Yahweh must be reaffirmed in every generation."[15] Yet, at times, the book obscures the distinction between the Sinai/Horeb generation and the conquest generation, addressing the latter as though it had been present at Sinai/Horeb (see 11:7), collapsing, as it were, these two generations into one Israel.[16] The final six verses of the chapter flow into Moses' Second Address and constitute an introduction to the Law Book.

> See, I have taught (*lamad*) you decrees and laws as the Lord (*Yĕhovah*) my God (*'elohiym*) commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom (*chokmah*) and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.[17]

W. Baker and E. Carpenter in their linguistic inquiry sheds considerable light on the writer's choice of the word in v.5 for teach or learn (*lamad*, v.10 used twice), stated thusly: "Lamad is a verb meaning to learn, to study, to teach, to be taught or to be learned. The verb form describes learning war, training for war, the lack of training or the

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[14]Robert Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History* (New York, NY: The Seabury Press, 1980), 36-43.

[15]J. G. McConville and J. G. Millar, *Time and Place in Deuteronomy*, JSOTS, 179 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 47.

[16]Biddle 2003, 7.

[17]Strong's, 2011, H3925.

acquisition of instruction."[18] In verses 5 and 6 Moses transfers the authority that he once held before the Lord's covenant people to their new headmaster, the Law, which is in effect symbolic of God's continued presence and rule with them while "possessing the land." The theological forcefulness of the verses cannot be overemphasized as it regards the place that Deuteronomy holds within the Old Testament cannon, where we now see the cost of free will and God's anticipatory recovery plan known here as repentance. "This theme of God's disciplinary immutability comes to a climax in chapter 4 as the speech looks to the day when the people will violate the very core of the covenant relationship by worshiping idols…while Deuteronomy 4 expressed a future hope that the exilic community would repent, focusing on the necessity of seeking with all one's affections…The future penitential response of the people described in Deuteronomy 4 is based on a work initiated and facilitated by YHWH (cf. 4:2)."[19]

In a unilateral arrangement of this type it is the sovereign alone who can set the terms of the covenant. Only that which Yahweh prescribes and all that Yahweh prescribes is normative and binding. The vassal's responsibility was to accept the covenant stipulations as given and to make every effort to keep them. The word used for intelligence, *hokmah* (v.6) often should be translated *prudence* rather than *wisdom* in the Old Testament, but we may detect here the beginning of the process, which eventually identified the Law with wisdom (Prv 8:22-36; Sir 24).[20] This passage sets the literary tone for future biblical publications, i.e., Wisdom Books, which subsequently personified

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[18]Roy B. Zuck, "Hebrew Words for Teach," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 121, no. 483 (July 1964), 420-421.

[19]Mark J. Boda and Gordon T. Smith, *Repentance in Christian Theology, Section One: Canonical Text* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006), 8, 11-12.

[20]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 105.

wisdom as a being, perpetually offering humanity a revelation of her in relating to God's creatures. The implication here is that one's reputation as a people, race, or society is completely influenced by their own behavior and what others see or hear is under their control. In verse 6 it appears that even Moses, the *great liberator* in the Hebrew Scriptures, recognized the value of education and the pursuit of excellence as a means for an oppressed minority group to gain a leg-up in a fast paced societal milieu like Canaan.

> What other nation is so great as to have their gods (*elohiym)* near them the way the Lord (*Yĕhovah)* our God (*elohiym)* is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws (*towrah)* I am setting before you today?

This theology of "the God who is near" (vv. 7-8) is connected to the older ideology of the Ark as the locus of Yahweh's presence to his people; he comes near in theophany, which is intimately associated with the Ark that Deuteronomy calls "the ark of the covenant" (Dt 31: 9, 25, 26; 10:18; Jos 3: 8).[21] Hearkening back to what was mentioned at verses 5, 6 regarding the passing of the pedagogical torch, i.e. Yahweh's instruction to Moses who in turn teaches the people, is in effect establishing the Law as the quintessence of Israel's God living and moving with them in their new environment. Michael Grisanti concurs with this view in addressing the inspirational nature of God's commandments, he affirms, "The meaning or sense of these laws and not their exact wording was at stake. The covenant treaty stipulations Moses gave Israel lacked nothing… Rather, they emphasize the fact that God's word is sufficient or complete. The book of Deuteronomy needed no additional rules or stipulations, and none of those given

[21]Ibid.

through Moses were superfluous."[22] Verses 7 and 8 are later reinforced from the text chosen by Jesus during the Temptation in his citation of Deuteronomy 8:3, "that He might make you know man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD."[23]

Without a doubt these foundational texts must have influenced the creation of the *Article(s) of Religion* for both Anglican (#6) and Wesleyan/Methodist (#5) traditions regarding *The sufficiency of the Holy Scripture for Salvation.* The opening paragraph of this creedal statement reads as follows:

> Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.[24]

Both ecclesiastical communities have historically stressed the significance of education, religious and secular, as essential toward the maturation of one's faith and prescribe a rigorous instructional process at the earliest stages of life within their collective Christian Education curriculum.

> Only be careful, and watch yourselves (*nephesh)* closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach (*yada`)* them to your children (*ben*) and to their children after them.[25]

Verses 9-10 is where the merging process of the generations initially appears, where Moses reflects on the events that the people saw at Horeb and are encouraged to

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[22]Michael A. Grisanti, "Inspiration, Inerrancy, and the OT Canon: The Place of Textual Updating In An Inerrant View of Scripture" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society.* Louisville, KY: 44/4, 2001, 594-595.

[23]Dt 8: 2-3.

[24]*The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2008.*

[25]Dt 8: 9-10.

remember. The role of memory and tradition, with reference to the Exodus-Horeb event, is often stressed in Deuteronomy.[26] The word *nephesh* also appears in this verse and is usually translated "soul, self, life...appetite, mind...the breathing substance or being...the inner being of man or person or individual."[27] This definition clarifies commonly held beliefs that claim the soul is a disembodied version of the individual, emphasizing here the degree of remembrance or mindful seeking that is intended. Thus, "...the quality of seeking that is encouraged in Deuteronomy 4, a seeking with all one's inner affections...but this seeking is now defined more carefully as a reflection on the grace and discipline of God exemplified in the covenant agreement and known in the community's experience."[28]

In their etymological analysis of the various Hebrew terms for teach or learn, (*yada`*, v.9) Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter offer these findings: "Yadah is a verb meaning to know, to learn, to perceive, to discern, to experience, to confess, to consider, to know people relationally, to know how, to be skillful, to be made known, to make oneself known and to make to know. The simple meaning is to know."[29] It can be safely stated that the expression knowledge is power is quite applicable here and may be explained as an individual's ability to act on what she/he knows with wisdom and relevance. It is here at v.9 that the centrality of the foregoing theme rests since the transmission of the intellectual prowess inherent in the Law must be entrusted to the

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[26]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 1968.

[27]James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible,* 1822-1894, (Reprinted 1980 Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press), H5315.

[28]Boda and Smith, 8.

[29]Zuck, 420-421.

succeeding generations. The author deliberately chooses his words when referring to the descendants of his Hebrew audience, frequently using the term *ben* (male, young child, grandson) instead of *yalad* (offspring, youth)[30] so that it is clear this process must start at an early age. Hence the education of young children, generally sons, is vital to the fulfillment of covenantal requirements and is not to ever be viewed as optional or subordinate to training the adults. One can hardly ignore an often-quoted passage that permeates this exposition from the Wisdom teachings of the Old Testament in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."[31] As will be presented with greater detail in the verse that follows this exercise was not to be some sort of abbreviated or unscripted homily, but a deliberate and systematic training regimen at an appointed location and time.

> Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble (*qahal*) the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn (*lamad)* to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach (*lamad)* them to their children (*ben*)." (NIV) (i.e., congregation).

The speaker dutifully repeats to a wilderness worn version of the covenant community the command previously given to him, during an up close and personal session with the Lord, to assemble (*qahal*, or gather*)* their parents for an appointment with Him. The verb *qhl* is used in Deuteronomy here and in 31:12, 28 only, but the substantive *qahal*, assembly or congregation, occurs often and has influenced the concept of the Church in the New Testament through the LXX translation, *ekklēsia*..."[32] Referencing the preceding opinion it is implied that the writer intends for this period of

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[30]Strong 1980, H1121; H3205.

[31]Prv 22:6.

[32]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 105.

instruction to be considered both a formal and mandatory learning activity involving not just the usual adult male attendees but the entire tribal population.

Speaking purely from a philological perspective the precision involved in the author's utilization of vocabulary cannot be overstated, even to a slight degree. His continuous use of the term *lamad* is remarkably purposeful offering both theological and historical clues regarding Deuteronomy's application in early Jewish society. As asserted by Roy B. Zuck, "The word Talmud (Iamadu) is a derivative of Lamad. The Talmud is the literal instructions, the authoritative body of Jewish traditions and the Hebrew code of laws, covering all aspects of life."[33]

The Talmudic mention has likely contributed to the chorus of opinions that favor a 6th century BC timeline for the completion of the book, drawing a parallel between the exiles contemporaneous with Moses and those who spent an even longer stretch in Babylon (606-586).

As the researcher considers his context, the questions could be raised concerning this Old Testament narrative, what shall they teach? What will be gained by what they teach? How will you be viewed by what you teach? When the researcher examined this narrative, it was there that the researcher discovered that God not only had a word for Israel, but He also had a word for us as a people. It was a word, which came to Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, *forty years* before they entered the land of promise and *about three months* after they left the land of Egypt. God did not want the people to forget who He was and how they should live under Him. If they forgot, the results would be catastrophic. God commanded the elders of Israel to pass on their heritage of faith and

[33]Roy Zuck, *Hebrew Words for "Teach," Bibliotheca Sacra 121*, no. 483. July, 1964, 239

religious instruction to their children. From one generation to the next they were to preserve their tradition and remember God's Word.

Again, what shall they teach? The researcher believes that the church must teach that which is right and good. The researcher understood in creating this project that there was a need from the very beginning, that babies and very young children alike be taught using biblical principles so that they will be able to know what to do when faced with challenges. This allows the teacher the opportunity to lead children correctly as they grow. Using the Bible and the teaching of the same as the true guide to develop strong morals is the ultimate way for children to develop a strong social/spiritual foundation. This is needed as children are led towards mature leadership and influence as they pass through different stages in life. This passage requires them to have to settle various issues along the way. Without knowing God and using the knowledge that has been taught allows the enemy to take over and control our children. When the social and emotional aspects of a child are strong and sound, then other learning can happen more readily. Once again, the teaching found in St. Matthew 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" supports this.

With parent and the child working together on that who is taught in school, it helps the parent to be able to show Christ to their child/children. Good parents take seriously the responsibility of showing Christ.

What will be gained by what they teach? The researcher believes that children will have a greater understanding of who God is and what He expects of us. This allows for the liberation of learning. In other words, children will have a better understanding of why they are learning what they are being taught as it all ties back to God.

Within the context of Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center curriculum, children at an early age are able to tell you that God made them and that as His children we are to learn, grow, and glow for Him. Following this thinking, children will understand how to respond in a classroom setting. They will be able to follow directions given by their teachers and others. They will want to participate because of their knowledge of God and their belief they are His children and that they want to please Him.

How will you be viewed by what you teach? The researcher believes that once you are taught, then you will be seen as being successful and a liberator of people. You are equipped and ready to possess everything, which God has in store for your life.

As explained previously, the New Testament will also show, that the teaching stressed here must be focused on the very young, be scholarly, comprehensive and appropriate to both present and future scenarios in order that the covenant-making God is well represented by an exceptionally prepared people.

The New Testament Foundation

This section will serve as a transition from the previous argument on the legal basis for educating children in the Hebraic community of the Old Testament era and the ensuing practices that continued from the post-exilic period onward. The primary biblical source that will be cited is from 2 Timothy 1: 5-6, 11; 3: 14-15, 17 with the intent to further clarify and confirm these practices in the centuries following Deuteronomy's production.

"When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.

Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands." And he states, in verse 11 "to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."[34]

> But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."[35]

Ernest Simon asserts the following, "The Jewish people almost alone, of all the ancient nations, provided for the universal schooling of its children. The earliest historical evidence to support this contention as of the first century B. C. E. can be found in the Palestinian Talmud (ca. 400 CE). Later complementary evidence as of the year 66 C.E. can be found in the Babylonian Talmud (ca. 500 CE) as well as supporting statements by Flavius Josephus. The underlying motive for this legislation and practice has been the concept of Torah, i.e., the divine law and lore, the study of which was the religious duty of the highest order, not only for priests and scholars, but for the ordinary Jew as well."[36]

As alluded to in the previous section this process was both formalized and covenantal involving the training of the youngest members of the community. Although insisting on the instruction of youngsters during their early childhood years was promoted, there was an apparent inequity along gender lines that the Law itself supported. The rigidity of this practice appeared to transcend time, regime change and the cultural transformations of the region ushered in during the campaigns of Alexander the

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[34]2 Tm 1:5-6, 11.

[35]2 Tm 1: 17.

[36]Simon, Ernest, "Hebrew Education in Palestine," *Journal of Educational Sociology,* Palestine: American Sociological Association, Vol. 22, No. 3, (Nov., 1948), 190-205.

Great (*c.* 356-323 BC) and his posterity. Thomas D. Lea addresses the matter thusly, "Education for Palestinian Jews at the time of Christ would have involved education from a Rabbi among young males while females would have only learned home skills from their mothers, but in the Greek world of the Roman Empire education was available for both boys and girls until the age of eighteen."[37] While the distinction in the content of the curriculum may have focused on vastly different areas impacting an individual's development, Jewish emphasis on moral enhancement and the Greeks on athletics, both systems offered mutual advantages. Beverly Gaventa offers this comment, "Greco-Roman education, though fluid and varied, generally involved three stages: primary, secondary, and tertiary, with a diminishing number of individuals advancing to the second and third stages…Elementary students…learned simple arithmetic, how to copy and read aloud simple texts, and how to write."[38]

2 Timothy 1: 5-6, 11

I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."[39]

The preceding statements describe the historical environment of Paul's young mentee Timothy who was born into these dual cultural and social influences. Whether one supports the literary arguments concerning genuine Pauline authorship, (1 & 2

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[37]Thomas D. Lea and David Alan Black, The *New Testament: Its Background and Message*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: H&B Academic, 2003), 39.

[38]Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David L. Petersen, Editors. *The New Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible,* The Education of Children in Ancient Greece (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 986.

[39]2 Tm 1:5 (NIV).

Timothy, Titus, et al., Pseudonymous Letters), however, it is certain the person described in the subsequent texts is an actual product of this educational process.

Writing around A.D. 67 as a presumed captive under Roman authority Paul sets the tone in this communiqué that was presented previously (v.3) where he emphasizes the continuity of the Jewish religion and the Christian faith. His conversion did not involve a complete break with the past (cf. Acts 23:1; 24:14-16; 26:6, 22; 1 Tm 1:13)...In addition; Timothy's mother had become a Christian (Acts 16:1)[40]

> Paul pointed to the genuine work of God in Timothy's life as a basis for his gratitude. First, he commended Timothy's faith as "sincere" ("genuine," Williams). The faith to which Paul referred was a faith in the God of the Old Testament who had revealed himself in Jesus. Like Timothy the researcher's trust in Jesus had led him to faithfulness in action. Second, Paul commended the spiritual heritage Timothy had received. This faith in the God of the Bible had first lived in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Their faith was the expression of the faith of a "true" Jew (Rom 2:28–29), which found its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The pair had a genuine expectant faith for the Messiah of the Old Testament. When they heard the gospel, they believed upon Jesus Christ as the Messiah for whom they had hoped. They passed their faith on to Timothy. Paul was tracing the faith of Timothy back to its roots. Third, Paul declared that he was certain of the reality of Timothy's faith. The expression "I am persuaded" ("I am sure," NASB) employs a Greek perfect tense that implies that Paul was thoroughly convinced. Paul did not state what "reminded" him of Timothy's sincere faith, but the expression suggests that some act from outside Paul had prompted his memory.[41]

For this reason I remind (*anamimnēskō)* you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.... Paul uses in multiple places within the text a particular word for remind, *anamimnēskō,* translated as "to call to remembrance" or to remind or to admonish,[42] when speaking to Timothy in close

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[40]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 357.

[41]T. D. Lea, & H. P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*: *The New American Commentary Vol. 34* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 185-186.

[42]Strong, G363.

similarity to how Moses addressed the assembly in Deuteronomy 4:10. The intention here, as it was back then, is a stern caution to be accountable in one's responsibilities to a God who expects a return on God's investment. Timothy enjoys a permanent grace of consecration by virtue of his ordination through the imposition of Paul's hands.[43] His unique designation as the pastor of the people in Ephesus demands his full attention to both the mission and purpose of the Gospel. As he is now being reminded he will later provide instructions to the appointed leaders of the church that will in turn be required to train those under their care. "And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher (*didaskalos).*"[44]

One of the definitions for the term *didaskalos* is "the teachers of the Jewish religion"[45] which firmly establishes the Apostle's function with his new convert(s). Although the title of Rabbi is never used when referring to Paul it was likely that he would have been accorded this level of respect from the Jewish half of Timothy's family.

> The mention of the "gospel" provided Paul with an opportunity to describe his role in proclaiming the good news. He elaborated on that role to remind Timothy that he had been imprisoned for the sake of the gospel. If Paul endured imprisonment for a divinely appointed task, Timothy had no reason to be ashamed of him. Paul was not informing Timothy of his call to preach, but he was reminding him that God had put him into his present circumstances. Paul may have been reminding Timothy that he also could expect such an appointment in his preaching of the gospel.
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> The three nouns ("herald," "apostle," "teacher") of v. 11 also appear in 1 Tim 2:7. Paul's use of the emphatic pronoun "I" indicates that he was placing emphasis on his own appointment to office. The term "herald" stressed the boldness and openness of Paul's evangelistic work. Paul had a message to which he had given wide publicity before audiences of kings, magistrates, and commoners. The term "apostle" reminded Timothy of Paul's special commission

[43]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 357.

[44]1 Tm 1:11.

[45]Strong, G1320.

and emphasized the authoritative nature of his proclamation. Paul was not emphasizing his own personal authority as much as he was emphasizing the authority of the gospel. The term "teacher" underscored Paul's responsibility to explain the faith with clarity for all believers.[46]

HEARLD. 1) Aram. *kārôz* occurs only in Dn. 3:4 with reference to the official who relayed Nebuchadrezzar's commands. *kārôz* may be derived from Old Persian *xrausa (KB)*, 'caller', or is related to Hurrian *kirezzi*, 'proclamation'. The causative form of the associated verb *krz*, 'made a proclamation', occurs in Dn. 5:29 (see A. Shaffer, *Orientalia* 34, 1965, pp. 32–34). 2) Heb. *m^{e}bassereṯ* (Is. 40:9; masculine. Is. 41:27), 'bringing good news', is rendered in RSV as 'herald of good tidings'. The verbal form is used elsewhere in Is. in the same sense of preaching the deliverance of Yahweh (Is. 52:7; 61:1). 3) Gk. *kēryx* is translated 'herald' by RSV in 2 Pet. 2:5, but 'preacher' in 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11.[47]

APOSTLE. There are over 80 occurrences of the Gk. word *apostolos* in the NT, mostly in Luke and Paul. It derives from the very common verb *apostellō* to send, but in non-Christian Gk., after Herodotus in the 5th century BC, there are few recorded cases where it means 'a person sent', and it generally means 'fleet', or perhaps occasionally 'admiral'. The sense of 'sent one, messenger' may have survived in popular speech: at least, isolated occurrences in the LXX and Josephus suggest that this meaning was recognized in Jewish circles. Only with Christian literature, however, does it come into its own. In NT it is applied to Jesus as the Sent One of God (Heb. 3:1), to those sent by God to preach to Israel (Lk. 11:49) and to those sent by churches (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25); but above all it is applied absolutely to the group of men who held the supreme dignity in the primitive church. Since *apostellō* seems frequently to mean 'to send with a particular purpose', as distinct from the neutral *pempō* (save in the Johannine writings, where the two are synonyms), the force of *apostolos* is probably 'one commissioned'—it is implied, by Christ.

It is disputed whether *apostolos* represents in NT a Jewish term of similar technical force. Rengstorf, in particular, has elaborated the theory that it reflects the Jewish *šālîaḥ,* an accredited representative of religious authority, entrusted with messages and money and empowered to act on behalf of the authority (for the idea, *cf.* Acts 9:2); and Gregory Dix and others have applied ideas and expressions belonging to the *šālîaḥ,* concept (*e.g.* a man's *šālîaḥ* is as himself) to the apostolate and eventually to the modem episcopate. Such a process is full of perils, and not least because there is no clear evidence that *šālîaḥ* was used in this sense until post-apostolic times. *apostolos*, in fact, may well be the earlier as a

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[46]T. D. Lea, & H. P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus: The New American Commentary Vol. 34* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 193.

[47]D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer and D. J. Wiseman, Eds., *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press), 465.

> technical term, and it is safest to seek its significance in the meaning of *apostellō* and from the contexts of the NT occurrences.[48]

Chapter 3: 14-15, 17

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned (*manthanō)* and have become convinced (*pistoō)* of, because you know those from whom you learned (*manthanō)* it." Paul's frequent use of *manthanō,* a word whose variant translations mean "to be increased in knowledge, to hear, be informed, to learn by use and practice" offers Timothy an important clue that he is capable and prepared to execute the tasks at hand. His application of the word *pistoō,* which means, "to make faithful, render trustworthy to make firm, establish,"[49] is a sort of pep talk aimed at assuring his young protégé that both the source and depth of his teachings are time-honored and reliable regardless of the circumstances.

Timothy had learned the gospel and its demands from a compassionate cadre of teachers. They had not only taught him its outline but had assured him of its reality and truthfulness. Timothy's need was not to search out new novelties on which he might squander his energies but to remain in the truths he had learned.

> The term continues (*menō*) is the same term translated hold to or remain in John 8:31; 15:5–6. It demands more than merely continuing in orthodoxy. It called for a commitment to live and abide in what Timothy had learned.
>
> An incentive for remaining in these truths was the personal impact of his teachers upon him. The reference to the "whom" that had instructed Timothy is a plural pronoun in the Greek. Paul was thinking of the moral impact made on Timothy's life by his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois (1:5) as well as by Paul himself. Perhaps the term also included a reference to other godly Christian instructors such as some of the "many witnesses" of 2 Tim 2:2. As White

[48]Ibid., 58.

[49]Strong, G3129, G4103.

> observes, "The truths for which St. Paul is contending were commended to Timothy by the sanction of the best and noblest personalities whom he had ever known or heard of." That fact alone should have led Timothy to continue to stand fast in the truths of the gospel."[50]

And how from infancy (*brephos)* you have known the Holy Scriptures (*gramma)*, which are able *(dynamai)* to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus... The word *brephos* can either be translated an unborn child, a new-born child or an infant[51] echoing Jeremiah's prophetic call in chapter 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee..."[52] It appears that Paul is confirming the covenantal and legal connections regarding the nature of his youthful envoy's faith, (see section on preaching style in Dt) by revealing that a major prophet in Hebrew history overcame his childhood insecurities and through many trials proved himself worthy of his calling.

The phrase *hiera grammaia* or Holy Scriptures was current among Greek-speaking Jews (Philo, Josephus) to designate the biblical books. Jewish parents were obliged to see that their children were instructed in the Law as soon as they reached the age of five. [53] These inspired texts in the Old Testament possessed the actual strength and capability or *dynamai*, translated "to have power whether by virtue of one's own ability and resources,"[54] to endow young Timothy with the requisite knowledge and wisdom (see above Law as Wisdom) to teach others the Christian faith.

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[50]Lea, and Griffin, *122.*

[51]Strong, G1025.

[52]Lea, and Griffin, *122.*

[53]Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 359.

[54]Strong, G1410.

So that the servant of God may be thoroughly (*artios*) equipped (*exartizō)* for every good work. Exartizō is the verbal form of a compound word that means to complete, finish and as a derivation of *artios* it indicates having reference apparently to special aptitude for given uses.[55] Paul is attempting to convey to the young recipient of this letter that he is a breed apart both from a genealogical and theological perspective and prior to or at birth he was set aside for special use in God's plan of salvation since His first divine utterance to Timothy's predecessors. As it was stated regarding the completeness of the Law for Israel's preparation to face whatever awaited them on the other side of the plains of Moab, likewise those same sacred writings are fully furnished with all the essentials for Timothy to finish the course laid out for him. Not only will he be able to complete the journey, as did his master teacher Paul before him, but also those that he will ultimately educate in the soul saving truth of his well grounded faith.

Summary

The fundamental objective of the aforementioned conversation was to establish the effectiveness of early learning programs and how they contribute toward developing children into life-long learners. The selection of the preceding scriptural passages was based on their relevance to the subject and through an exhaustive hermeneutical inquiry the findings are the following. The text from Deuteronomy served as the foundational teaching regarding both the value and practice of educating children at the earliest stages of their development. It was demonstrated that this system was instituted within the ancient Hebraic community as essential for an individual to benefit from the wisdom of past generations and by persistent dedication to in-depth study they would become

[55]Ibid., G739, G1822.

productive citizens in society. It was further revealed that the learning process included the following stipulations:

- It must be clear that the training is not optional
- Assemble everyone in a specific location
- The sessions must adhere to a clearly defined regimen
- There was to be no age limit, the younger the better
- The material must be relevant and well presented
- Subsequent learning experiences must involve the entire household orchestrated by the eldest male

A subtheme of this system was that it prepared individuals within an identified minority to develop skills for a variety of social, cultural and geographical milieus resulting in earning them the distinction of possessing intellectual prowess. Because this practice was considered covenantal and therefore mandatory, the people of Israel have throughout history expanded their passion for knowledge into multiple disciplines, and through redaction and circumlocution have continuously updated their biblical texts with a commitment toward equipping every succeeding generation. Their objective has never been to produce a community of educated people, i.e. people with upper level degrees, but to create a society of scholars who view it as a bounden duty to make learning the number one priority over the course of a person's life.

Their efforts were so thorough and effective that the movement of time, political upheavals, theological reconsiderations and scientific or technological changes did not deter them from this God inspired responsibility for their new covenant descendants. In the investigation that focused on the Letter to Timothy, it became apparent that Paul was the right choice for the mission to the Gentile population who already had a formal

system of learning in place and fully deployed. The Greco-Roman citizens placed a high priority on learning and opened the way for the Hebrew culture, now under occupation, to widen the gate to include young girls thus breaking through the gender barrier. This expansion of the educational process cannot be overestimated in that its influences insured that future Judeo-Christian communities would not get tripped up on the restrictions of the old covenant but have to the present day remained on pace regarding this provision.

Since Paul did not relinquish his former tradition, following his conversion, he instructed young Timothy to follow his example and to study in order that no one could invalidate the quality of his childhood education. He reminded him that his fidelity to the faith of his mothers would fortify him throughout the various anticipatory challenges that he would no doubt face both in his efforts to practice his faith and teaching others to do likewise. Essentially, Paul referred to himself as a teacher; regardless of the multitudinous titles he wore (e.g. Pharisee, Apostle, and preacher), so that Timothy would understand that this above all else is the highest calling that any servant of God belonging to either tradition should aspire to.

Historical Foundation

The purpose of this section is to establish the importance of education within an historical context. It is the intent of the researcher to trace the formation of education in the United States and to examine the influence organized religion had on its development, particularly as it relates to African Americans. This historical foundation will also

address the policies, practices, and cultural representations in our educational system that may be the cause of the disparities or achievement gaps that currently exist.

Foundations Of Education

In 1972, the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) launched an advertising campaign and introduced an iconic quote, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." The sentiment expressed in this inspirational slogan has inspired generations of African Americans to better their lives through the pursuit of education. The phrase is widely used by educators, parents, clergy, and coaches to emphasize the importance of an education. According to the Encarta dictionary, education is defined as the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at a school or similar institution. In his autobiography, *Dear Me*, Sir Peter Alexander Ustinov, an English actor, writer and dramatist writes, "What is education but a process by which a person begins to learn how to learn?" In America, the "process by which a person begins to learn" has been defined by one's race and wealth, age and gender.

Florida was the site of the first settlements in the New World. Florida was not considered as one of the original 13 colonies because it was controlled by Spain. The first English settlement in the New World was established in Virginia (Jamestown) in 1607. The history of African Americans people in America began in August 1619 when twenty Africans settled in Jamestown. History reflects that the first African to arrive at Jamestown were either slaves or indentured servants. According to Lerone Bennett, Jr.;

> In Virginia, then as in other colonies, the first Negro settlers fell into a well-established socio-economic groove, which carried with it no implications of racial inferiority. That came later. But in the interim, a period of forty years or more, the

> first Negroes accumulated land, voted, testified in court and mingled with whites on a basis of equality.[56]

As more settlers arrived in the New World, the colonies developed based on geography, commerce, religious and social views and can be grouped into three or four regions according to the background and motivation of the settlers.

The early settlers in the Southern Colonies (some historians divide this region into two: the Chesapeake Bay Colony and the Southern Colonies) had a mixture of religious backgrounds including Anglicans and Baptists and they tended to live on plantations. They developed a thriving agricultural commerce of growing tobacco, rice and indigo. Southern colonists used slaves and indentured servants[57] to work their land. The settlers in the New England Colonies were Puritans who had strict codes of conduct. They oriented and encountered hard times upon their arrival and they worked together to raise crops to feed their families. Eventually they exported their excess crops to other regions and flourished in the areas of shipbuilding, lumbering and fur trading. Quakers were the dominant religious group to settle in the Middle Colonies though it was religious diverse (Catholics, Lutherans, Jew and others.) Their economy was thrived on iron, textiles shipping and some agricultural activity, specifically wheat, corn and dairy products.

It is obvious the early settlers came to the New World for a variety of reasons. Some came to escape religious oppression. Some came as slaves or indentured servants. Many came in search of economic gains and the pursuit of power, wealth, and status.

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[56]Lerone Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower* (New York, NY: Penguin Book, 1964), 36.

[57]The Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia Website, *5b. Indentured Servants*. 28 August 2012. <http://www.ushistory.org/us/5b.asp> Each ***indentured servant*** would have their fare across the Atlantic paid in full by their master. A contract was written that stipulated the length of service — typically five years. The servant would be supplied room and board while working in the master's fields. Upon completion of the contract, the servant would receive "freedom dues," a pre-arranged termination bonus. This might include land, money, a gun, clothes or food.

Regardless of their reasons, they came and laid the foundation for the country that we know as the United States of America. Our history is replete with the struggles that this country has faced. We are, who we are because of the diversity of our religious beliefs, intellectual and political views, social, economic prowess and educational achievements.

Whatever the reasons for their journey to the New World, the early settlers determined that education was a necessity in "the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness." Education, especially the ability to read, was deemed important because the early settlers wanted everyone to understand the codes that they were living under in the New World; but, most especially, to be able to read the Bible. The educational disparities that exist today have their roots in the decisions about education that were made during the formation of this country. Whether intentional or unintended, the immutable traits of race (Africans), and gender (female) were used to determine the quality and quantity of the educational opportunities that a child would be afforded. Without question, another factor in the education equation was a person's socio-economic status as well poor children who lived in rural areas were also subjected to differences in their educational pursuits.

Puritans came to the New England Colonies in the 1620's and 1630's to escape religious oppression in England. Puritans are defined as,

> . . . a group of radical English Protestants that arose in the late sixteenth century and became a major force in England during the seventeenth century. Puritans wanted to "purify" the Church of England by eliminating traces of its origins in the Roman Catholic Church. In addition, they urged a strict moral code and placed a high value on hard work.[58]

[58]*Puritans, in The American Heritage® New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy,* Third Edition (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005), http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Puritans (accesed 23 August 2012).

Puritans were considered by some to be highly trained scholars who had very strict moral codes and work ethics. Puritans used the Bible as the basis for their religious, social, and political endeavors. The Bible was interpreted in complex ways to justify a hierarchal structure, both in the life of the family and in society. In the family, husbands controlled their wives and parents used harsh discipline to control their children. In society, the Bible was also used to keep women in a posture of being seen (as pure) but not heard (they were restricted from speaking in church). The Bible was also used to condone the system of indentured servitude as well as the owning of slaves. Religious leaders exercised significant influence. Consequently, they held positions of power, particularly as the colonies organized their governmental structures. Historical accounts of the Puritans suggest that most were men of letters who have been trained at the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. As such, they brought with them to this New World, a deeply rooted understanding of the importance of education and the resulting benefits of power, influence, and wealth. They were convinced that people should be educated so they could read the Bible for themselves and be informed about the laws that governed their behavior. According to Eric R. Eberling,

> Educated in some of the best English schools and colleges, many of these colonists took that heritage with them to America. In addition, their Puritan religious beliefs emphasized personal knowledge of the scriptures as a requirement for temporal living and eternal salvation.[59]

John Winthrop, a wealthy Puritan lawyer played a significant role in the settlement of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1630, Winthrop proclaimed that the

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[59]Eric Reberling, "Massachusetts Education Laws of 1642, 1647, and 1648," *in "Historical Dictionary of American Education*, edited by Richard J. Altenbaugh (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 225.

society they would form in New England would be as a city upon a hill;[60] and the colony leaders would educate all. Efforts began to establish schools, or Latin Grammar schools (or for short, grammar schools) that would be patterned after their English counterparts.

There are conflicting accounts of the school that was the school in the New England or Chesapeake Bay Colonies. The Syms Free School was established in 1634 lays claim to being the *first* free public school in America[61] because of donation of land by Benjamin Syms, who apparently could neither read nor write. However, the Boston Latin School claims the distinction as the first public school in America; established by Puritan settlers in 1635.[62] "Establishment of the school was due in great measure to the influence of the Reverend John Cotton, who sought to create in the New World a school like the Free Grammar School of Boston, England, in which Latin and Greek were taught."[63] Only boys attended Boston Latin School (until 1972 when girls were also accepted.)[64] Historical records reflect that Harvard University, founded in 1636, was opened as the logical next step in the advanced studies for the boys who graduated from

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[60]Galvin Finley, (essay by) John Winthrop *and 'A City upon a Hill'* http://endtimepilgrim .org/puritans02.htm (accessed august 2012).

[61]NASA Cultural Resources (CRGIS) http://crgis.ndc.nasa. gov/historic /Syms_Free_School_Site (accessed august 2012).

[62]City of Boston.Gov Official Web Site Freedom Trail, http://www.cityofboston. gov/freedomtrail /firstpublic.asp (accessed august 2012).

[63]Boston Latin School Association Official Web Site *About BLSA: History* http://www.bls. org/history?rc=0. (accessed august 2012).

[64]City of Boston.Gov Official Web Site Freedom Trail, http://www.cityofboston .gov/freedomtrail /firstpublic.asp (accessed august 2012).

Boston Latin. Harvard was (and still remains) the hallmark of academic excellence for young men (Harvard did not fully admit women into its sacred halls until the 1970s).[65]

During the colonial days, parents were the foundational source of education for their children; though the mother was charged with the responsibility. Education was primarily for the wealthy, upper class settlers, not necessarily for girls or the poor, and most certainly not for slaves or indentured servants. Subjects taught included reading, writing, simple math, poems, and prayers. School materials were at a scarce so students were required to memorize their lessons. The most commonly used books were the Bible, a primer, a psalter, and a hornbook. The boys often studied high math, Greek, Latin, science, celestial navigation (navigating ships by the stars), geography, history, fencing, social etiquette, and plantation management. If girls were allowed to attend school, the girls were taught just enough to read the Bible and simple math so they could record household expenses.[66] In addition to learning the 3Rs (Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic), girls from wealthy families learned French, music (playing the piano) and etiquette training.

The differences in the subject matters being taught during the formative years were based on the roles boys or girls were expected to assume in society. Girls were considered intellectually and physically inferior to boys and, therefore were relegated to household chores, working on the farm, and child-rearing. While many girls could read, they could not necessarily write and often signed their name with an "X". Boys on the

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[65]The National Women's History Project Web Site, *Women's History 2012 Gazette, Women's Education, Women's Empowerment*, http://www.nwhp.org/whm/index.php (accessed august 20120).

[66]Chesapeake College Web site. *History of Education in America*, http://www.Chesapeake .edu/Library/EDU_101/eduhist_colonial.asp, (accessed august 2012).

other hand were being prepared to engage in governance and the management of the family farms and other business enterprises. In wealthier families, the boys were provided with private tutors and were often sent abroad to complete their advanced studies; therefore their grammar school studies included the classical languages of Latin and Greek.[67] Tutors were almost exclusively male; though women were hired as a governess to teach young children (girls).

The growing importance of education to the early settlers is evidenced by the passage of the Massachusetts School Law of 1642 (School Law of 1642) which was enacted to ensure that parents and masters educated their children in religious principles and the laws of the colony in which they lived. The School Law of 1642 was the first, though certainly not the last, recorded act of government's intervention into the educational process. Five years after the School Law of 1642 was implemented, lawmakers expanded the intent of the original requirements so that funding would be made available to fund schools.

> The Massachusetts School Law of 1647 followed on the heels of voluntary efforts by some of the large towns during the preceding years of settlement to found, operate, and fund schools. These schools served only a small fraction of the population of the colony, which by this time had grown to 21,000 inhabitants. To impel the rest of Massachusetts to attend to the education of its children, the General Court passed legislation on
>
> November 11, 1647, which has become known as the Old Deluder Satan Act because of its opening reference to the Devil's efforts "to keep men from the knowledge of the scriptures." This law required towns with fifty or more families to organize a petty school, that is, to appoint a teacher of writing and reading for children. Towns' with100 or more families were required to establish a grammar school to provide more advanced instruction. Failure to comply with this mandate

[67]Note: Knowledge of classical languages increased a student's English vocabulary since about half of all English vocabulary comes from Latin and about 20 percent from Greek. Knowledge of the Roman and Greek cultures helped students' understanding of a democratic society.

> would result in a fine of £5.[68] In contrast, to the 1642 law and probably in consequence of its apparent neglect, this act stipulated the creation of schools of under the jurisdiction of towns, establishing a precedent for governmental control in education.[69]

In 1645, the Roxbury Latin School was established exclusively for boy's education and founded by another Puritan missionary, John Eliot. According to its official web site the original mission of Roxbury as set forth by the founders was: ". . . to prepare students intellectually, morally, and spiritually for service in the world as leaders of integrity and conviction."[70]

As education was growing in importance, the early settlers struggled with the ways to provide the instruction in reading and religion as required by the Massachusetts School Law of 1642. It is during this period that the researcher finds the development of schools ranging from the Dame Schools, to Latin schools for boys based. By today's standards these schools could be characterized as a modern day version of home schooling.

> Dame Schools were one of the more common types of schools found in the colonies. They were often established by women, and more often than not run from the home of the person in charge. Students were charged a modest fee to attend. Education was basic, concentrating on reading, writing, and calculation. Attendance was often erratic and dependent on the season and work at home that needed to be done. For most females the dame school provided their only

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[68]Note: Symbol £ - The currency symbol for British Sterling is the pound symbol that looks like a cursive capital L with a horizontal crossbar. This pound symbol (not to be confused with the pound or number sign #) is used to denote currency in the United Kingdom, including England and Scotland. It typically comes in front of the currency amount: £50. http://desktoppub.about.com/od/glossary/g/Pound-Symbol.htm.

[69]Eric R. Eberling, *Massachusetts Education Laws of 1642, 1647, and 1648," in Historical Dictionary of American Education*, ed. Richard J. Altenbaugh (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999). 225

[70]The Roxbury Latin School Web Site. *Who We Are,* http://www.roxburylatin .org/about-rl/index.aspx(accessed august 2012).

> education and homemaking skills such as sewing were also included in the instructional process.[71]

While these schools increased opportunities for girls to get an education, the subjects taught still perpetuated a bias based on gender. If their parents could afford it, after attending a dame school for a rudimentary education in reading, colonial boys moved on to grammar schools. In 1692, Daniel Defoe, noted author wrote

> One of the most barbarous customs in the world, considering us as a civilized [sic] and a Christian country; is that we deny the advantages of learning to women. ... Their youth is spent to teach them to stitch and sew, or make baubles. They are taught to read, indeed, and perhaps to write their names, or so; and that is the height of a woman's education. ... What is a man (a gentleman, I mean) good for, that is taught no more?[72]

Research indicates that education system being built benefited white male students in preparation for the acquisition of personal wealth and power in public and private enterprises. If you were a male child, born into a family with financial resources, you were more likely to receive an education. Children of poor families were less likely to receive an education. While girls were allowed to attend school, there were limitations on the subjects, which were taught, and her education ended after the completion of grammar school. Education for Africans (slaves and freed) was strictly prohibited notwithstanding the efforts of religious organizations and others. Even though education was not a priority in the Southern Colonies, research reveals that white parents organized old-field schools "which for all intent and purposes private tutors shared by several

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[71] Judy Gelbrich, Oregon State University - *School of Education, Module I – History and Philosophy of Education, Section II: History of Education – American Education, Part 1: Colonial American*. Oregan State University 1999. http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/ed416/ael.htm(accessed august 2012).

[72] Daniel Defoe, "The Education of Women," English Essays: Sidney to Macaulay, "The Harvard Classics," 1909–14. 26http://www.bartleby.com/27/13.html (accessed august 2012).

plantation households.[73] There is also evidence that some slave owners defied the laws and taught their slaves how to read using the Bible. Geographically, the best educational opportunities were in the New England Colonies.

In his article, *Every Man Able to Read,* Jack Lynch wrote: "Though New Englanders were more devoted to public schooling than southerners throughout the eighteenth century, schemes for literacy education were widespread throughout the colonies and the early United States."[74] University of Colorado historian Gloria L. Main writes, "Measuring literacy is problematic, however, because the term encompasses not one skill but two, each with a separate range of competency. Historians know if a person can write, but some who cannot write might be able to read."[75]

> What constitutes literacy has changed throughout history. At one point, a literate person was one who could sign his or her name. At other points, literacy was measured by the ability to read and write Latin (regardless of a person's ability to read or write his or her vernacular), or by the ability to read the Bible.[76]

Though it is difficult to pinpoint precisely, there are reports that the literacy rate in the mid-1700s was highest in the New England colonies, and lower in the Middle and Southern colonies. Cremin writes that "there was a significant underclass of whites,

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[73]Richard A. Cremin, *Traditions of American Education* (New York NY: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), 35.

[74]Jack Lynch, "The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation: Every Man Able to Read: Literacy in Early America," *CW Journal*, Winter 2011.

[75]Gloria L. Main, Central Buck School District, *An Inquiry Into When and Why Women Learned To Write In Colonial England*. 24 Aug 2012.

[76]*The New World Encyclopedia, Literacy* http://www.newworldencyclopedia. org/entry /literacy (accessed august 2012).

blacks and Indians in provincial America with little or no access to literacy, or to schooling, or to life alternatives—real or imagined."[77]

In his book, *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*, Carter G. Woodson wrote:

> The first real educators to take up the work of enlightening American Negros were clergyman interested in the propagation of the gospel among the heathen of the New World."... The Quakers believed in the "brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, and they taught the colored people to read their own "instruction in the book of the law that they might be wise unto salvation.[78]
>
> The most liberal and influential religious group interested in the education of the Negro was the Quakers. In the South the work of the Quakers was checked by while in the North they exerted a strong influence far beyond their own circle.[79]

William Penn was originally from England and was educated in Ireland and England. He was first introduced to Quakerism around the age of fifteen. Reasons of religious differences caused Penn and others to migrate to the New England colonies where they purchased land in what is now the lower New Jersey area. Penn was a proponent of democracy and religion freedom. The William Penn Charter School, opened in 1689, founded by William Penn was one of the first schools to offer education to all religions. It was also among the first schools for that girls could attend and to provide an education to children of all races (1770).[80] In 1704, Elias Neau, a French Huguenot and member of the Anglican Church, opened a private school for African slaves and Native Indians in New York City.

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[77]Richard A. Cremin, *Traditions of American Education* (New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc. 1976), 37.

[78]Carter G. Woodson, *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861: A History of the Education of the Colored People of the United States from the Beginning of Slavery to the Civil War,* 1919 (EBook).

[79]E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro in the United States* (New York, NY: The MacMillan Company 1957), 418.

[80]The William Penn Charter School, *The History of Access*. http://www.penncharter. com/ page.cfm?p=367 (accessed August 2012).

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (The Society), concerned about the lack of religious activity in the colonies, appointed Reverend Dr. Thomas Bray as commissary for Maryland in 1696. Responsibilities of the first missionaries included: performance of divine service, catechism, baptism, instruction for the heathen and infidels and the encouragement of educational establishments.[81] The Society established a mission school in Charleston in 1744 in which two Negroes were employed to instruct their fellowmen. During this time period, "the first boarding schools for girls in 1742, [82] the Bethlehem Female Seminary (now the Moravian College, in Germantown, Pennsylvania)" the Moravian Church patron Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf.

Anthony Benezet was born in France and immigrated to Philadelphia with his family in 1731 when he was seventeen years of age. Benezet was an abolitionist who was opposed to slavery and worked to convince local Quakers that owning slaves was not consistent with doctrines of Christianity. When Benezet attempts at a career in trade were unsuccessful, he began working as a schoolteacher. He later assumed a position at the Friends' English School of Philadelphia (now the William Penn Charter School) and while there, he established evening classes for Africans. Eventually, Benezet left the Friends' English School and opened the first public school exclusively for girls in 1754. In 1770, Benezet opened the Negro School at Philadelphia. The school was opened to

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[81]Wheaton College Web Site, Billy Graham Center, *Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* - Collection 155. Last Revised: 3/15/01 http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/155.htm#3 (accessed August 2012).

[82]The National Women's History Project Web Site. *Women's History 2012 Gazette, Women's Education, Women's Empowerment,* http://www.nwhp.org/whm/index.php (accessed August 2012).

slaves and free Blacks of all ages, the school offered instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, and Christian doctrine.[83] When Benezet died in 1784, he willed money to the support of the continued education of slaves and girls. On November 2, 1787, the African Free School, founded by members of the New York Manumission Society[84], opened its doors to provide education to children of slaves and free people of color using funds left by Benezet.

Efforts to provide educational opportunities for freedmen and slaves did not occur without challenges. Without the enlightened views of men such as Penn, Benezet and Neau, girls, and missionaries, girls, Africans (freed and enslaved) and Indians would not have been afforded opportunities to engage in studies that would help to prepare them to participate fully in the developing social order.

As slavery gained its foothold in the life of the early settlers, the Bible was used to *condemn or condone* the ownership of another human being. It is erroneous to accept that inhabitants of the New England and Middle colonies were more liberal on this subject than residents in the Chesapeake Bay and Southern colonies. Puritans accepted slavery and thought slaves had been cursed by God. The Christians who opposed slavery used Biblical teachings to convert everyone to Christianity and to demonstrate how slavery was in direct opposition to Christian Doctrine. For those who favored slavery, the messages of salvation and freedom were not well received. Those who supported slavery did not want to upset the order of things. They were against any efforts to convert or

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[83]American Treasures of the Library of Congress Memory. *A Quaker School* http://www.loc.gov /exhibits /treasures/tri029.html (accessed August 2012).

[84]The New York Manumission Society was an early American organization founded in 1785 to promote the abolition of the slavery of African descendants within the state of New York. The organization was made up entirely of white men, most of whom were wealthy and held influential positions in society.

educate slaves in Christian doctrine; believing that such enlightenment might agitate the slaves to seek freedom from bondage. Despite the opposition, there were numerous efforts to convert slaves to Christianity and to educate them, both slaves and free.

Hugh Bryan, a wealthy South Carolina slave owner was one such person. Bryan became caught up in the religious enthusiasm generated by the preaching of George Whitefield, the English revivalist who visited America seven times between 1738 and 1770.[85] Bryan soon followed him [Whitefield] and began preaching against slavery as a sin warning about God's coming punishment. His involvement affirmed the fears of those who were opposed to bringing slaves into Christianity because his preaching raised the threat of slave uprisings. His ministry had little practical effect, as over time Bryan abandoned his antislavery position and took up life once again as a respectable planter and slaveholder. However, in 1755 he did fund a school for enslaved Africans in Virginia. Five years later, in Williamsburg, Virginia, the Bray School for Negro Children was opened under the leadership of Ann Wager and named in honor of Reverend Dr. Thomas Bray.[86]

Coincidental to the growth of Christianity and the requisite teaching of the Bible, in 1741, the settlers in South Carolina passed a law that banned the teaching of enslaved people to read and write, and prohibited their ability to assemble in-group or earn money for their activities. Notwithstanding this law, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts continued its efforts to encourage educational growth when they

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[85] *"Slavery and African American Religion." American Eras*. 1997. from Encyclopedia.com: http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2536600634.html (accessed August 2012).

[86] The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Colonial Williamsburg: *That the Future May Learn* http://www.history.org/092908/TheBraySchool.cfm (accessed August 2012).

established a mission school in Charleston in 1774 and employed two Negroes to instruct their fellowmen.

The passage of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 marked another shift in the development of the United States. In spite of the treatment they had received since being brought to the New World, slaves and free Africans joined in the war and fought on both sides persuaded by the promises of freedom. The years during and immediately following the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) were tumultuous. It is recorded that 100,000 slaves left their masters during the Revolution and that freedoms were being granted in limited and substantial ways. Vermont became the first state to abolish slavery in 1777. Three years later, in 1780, Massachusetts abolished slavery and granted Black males the right to vote. While changes were being made, life after slavery was just as challenging for those who with limited literacy skills and limited or no education. Additionally, whites, particularly those in the South, did not easily conform to attempts being made to integrate former slaves into society.

Earlier concerns that education might incite slaves to press for freedom and all of its attending benefits began to manifest when Blacks in Boston engaged in an uprising because of the inequality and discrimination that existed in the public schools. In 1798, members of Boston's Black community organized a grammar school that met in the home of Primus Hall, the son of Prince Hall, a community leader whose petitions to allow Black children into the city's school system had long been denied.[87] By 1820 the city finally established two (2) schools for Blacks. Abiel Smith, a white businessman and

[87]Historic Building of Massachusetts: Abiel Smith School (1835), Museum, http://mass.historic buildingsct.com/?p=2649 (accessed August 2012).

philanthropist left $4,000 for the education of Black children and a portion of the money was used to build the Abiel Smith School.

As stated previously, early settlers came to the New World in search of religious freedoms. During that time, many Anglican missionaries and others would come to the New England colonies preaching the Christian Doctrine of salvation. However, like education, religion was not without its own struggles. Though Methodism began with a strong stance against slavery, it would eventually buckle under the contradictions of the times where Blacks and whites could not worship together. It is well documented, that the Methodist Episcopal Church fought internally over the issue of slavery and enacted church law that denounced, as inconsistent with Christianity, the buying, selling, or owning of slaves.

Like other religious groups, Methodist preachers sought out free and enslaved persons for conversion. The message of salvation, as delivered by the Methodists preachers, was understandable and offered a message of hope and comfort that those who were being oppressed needed to hear. An unfortunate incident at the St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia triggered a rebellious act that resulted in the establishment of the Free African Society (FAS) in 1787 by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones. Allen had purchased his freedom for $2,000.00 and traveled the region preaching the gospel.

During the formative years, the FAS met in the blacksmith shop owned by Allen and debated whether they should remain affiliated with the Methodist Church. Allen was inclined to stay with the Methodist Church, despite the church's struggles over the question of slavery. He purchased a lot to build a church, which would later house

Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, but the Methodist Church resisted the desire of FAS to worship without interference. Ultimately, Allen sued the Methodist Church and won. In 1816, Allen invited other churches in the Middle Atlantic region to a conference in Philadelphia and it was there that the African Methodist Episcopal Church was began as the first independent Black denomination in America. Allen was elected as its first Bishop.

Richard Allen clearly understood the importance of education and the role it played in the acquisition of wealth and power. According to the Reverend George L. Champion, Sr., the former Director of the Department of Worship and Evangelism for the AME Church,

> In 1795, Allen organized a day school for 60 pupils. Later in 1804, because education was so important to Allen and his followers, they organized a 'Society of Free People of Color for Promoting the Instruction and School Education of Children for African descent.[88]

Up to this point in our nation's history, educational advantages being afforded to African children were largely being provided by schools, which were being instituted by religious organizations (mostly Quakers) and the benevolence of wealthy individuals. However, as progress was being made to educate all children, regardless of race, gender, or socio-economic status, obstacles were being put in place by the legislative bodies throughout the country.

Between 1823 and 1835, many states, particularly in the South, began to pass legislation forbidding the education of enslaved and/or free Africans; to include, Mississippi (1823), Louisiana (1830), North Carolina and Virginia (1831), Alabama

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[88]George L. Champion, *The Pastor's Manual For The 21st Century Volume I: Toward the Order of Deacon* (Nashville, TN: AMEC Publishing House, 2002), 186.

(1832). Even in the North, the records reflect that schools that had been opened for the purposes of educating Africans were forced to close because of white opposition. Such was the case with the Noyes Academy (1835) in New Hampshire. In the face of these types of actions, Oberlin College moved forward and became the first college to regularly admit blacks and women.

> The development of schools among the Negros in the United States represents largely the influence of social forces outside the Negro community. Unlike the development of the family and mutual aid societies, the emergence of the earliest schools among Negroes was the direct result of the philanthropic efforts of whites.[89]

Established by a Sulpician priest and three founding members of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the Baltimore School for Colored Girls opened its doors on June 13, 1828. Renamed the St. Frances Academy in 1850, the school's founding mission was to teach children of color to read the Bible—an illegal act during an era of American slavery.[90] Because of the generosity of Richard Humphreys, The Institute for Colored Youth was chartered in 1837 (currently Cheney University) and is the oldest institution of higher education for African Americans.[91]

> Born on a plantation in the West Indies, Richard Humphreys came to Philadelphia in 1764. Having witnessed the struggles of African Americans competing unsuccessfully for jobs due to the influx of immigrants, he became interested in their plight. In 1829, race riots heightened and it was that year Richard Humphreys wrote his will and charged thirteen fellow Quakers to design an institution: "...to instruct the descendents [sic] of the African Race in school learning, in the various branches of the mechanic Arts, trades and

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[89]Franklin E Frazier, *The Negro in the United States* (New York, NY: The MacMillan Company, 1957), 417.

[90]Historical Perspective as posted by Willa Young Banks, "A Contradiction in Antebellum Baltimore: A Competitive School for Girls of 'Color' within a Slave State," *Maryland Historical Magazine 99, no. 2 (Summer 2004):* http://www.sfacademy.org/Historic_Narrative.aspx (accessed August 2012).

[91]Cheney University History, http://www.cheyney.edu/about-cheyney-university/ (accessed August 2012).

> Agriculture, in order to prepare and fit and qualify them to act as teachers....[92]

In that same year, chemist and educator Mary Lyon founded Mount Holyoke College (then called Mount Holyoke Female Seminary) which was the first institution of higher education for women. Over two hundred (200) years after Harvard opened for the purpose of educating while males of financial means, the universities dedicated to educating women and black opened their doors.

Education is defined as: "the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life."[93] Further, education is the process by which knowledge, skills, customs and values are conveyed from one generation to another. If the purpose of education was (and is) to develop a person's ability to reach his or her fullest potential so they become productive, reasonable and virtuous member of society; then African descendants were significantly disadvantaged. Consequently, they would spend another 200 years in pursuit of equal educational opportunities.

By 1838 there were thirteen private schools in Philadelphia for the education of African Americans. In 1847, Missouri bans education for free Blacks and in 1848 Ohio outlawed Africans and mulattoes from attending school. Two years later, in 1849, most African-American parents in Boston felt compelled to withdraw their children from the Abiel Smith School because the schools in the city were segregated. In the same year, Avery College was founded by Charles Avery, a Methodist lay preacher, philanthropist, abolitionist, to provide a classical education for Negroes and in 1854, the Ashmun

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[92]Cheney University, http://www.cheyney.edu/about-cheyney-university/, (accessed August 2012).

[93]"Education." © *Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. Dictionary.com http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/education (accessed August 2012).

Institute (later renamed Lincoln University, after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln) opened as the first school of higher learning for young African American males (founded by John Miller Dickey and his wife, Sara Emlen Cresson.)

Despite all of these efforts, the educational system in this emerging New World was still fragmented and inconsistent. The structure, still favored individuals who were white, wealthy and male. Most people still used private schools to educate their students. Educational opportunities were also more prevalent in the North rather than the southern states. Attitudes surrounding the education of women were evolving, largely because "they would nurture not only the bodies but the minds of (male) citizens and leaders."[94] For every school that was built to enhance the intellectual acumen of children of African descent, however, there were corresponding efforts to severely limit or totally restrict those educational advancements.

However, in the 1840s, the public education was poised to undergo major changes because of Common School reformers like Horace Mann of Massachusetts and Henry Barnard of Connecticut. Henry Barnard was a member of the Connecticut House of Representatives from 1837-1839. In 1838, Barnard drafted and introduced a bill which provided for "the better supervision of the common schools" [95] and for the establishment of a board of "commissioners of common schools" in the state. He served as the secretary of the board from 1838 until its abolition in 1842.

But it is Horace Mann, generally considered the father of U.S. public education, who helped to create statewide common-school systems. He thought that if children were

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[94]The National Women's History Project Website, *Women's History 2012 Gazette, Women's Education, Women's Empowerment,* http://www.nwhp.org/whm/index.php (accessed August 2012).

[95]Note: Common schools were free elementary education to the masses and financed by public funds. The schools generally taught reading, writing and arithmetic.

educated and made literate they would make better citizens, unite society and prevent crime and poverty—the same ideals Americans hold dear today. Rising from humble beginnings, Mann was born in Franklin, Massachusetts and attended school only three months each year. He was fortunate enough to receive private tutoring and was able to graduate from Brown University. Described as a brilliant politician, Mann's work was apparently influenced greatly by his affiliation with Unitarianism. In 1837, he was appointed as the first secretary of the State Board of Education in Massachusetts. Mann is credited with making significant improvements to the quality of education throughout the State. He raised awareness of the educational problems of poor teaching, substandard materials, inferior school committees, and pupil absences. As a result, Mann was able to increase public support for education, established schools for teacher training, improved the quality of materials being used, built new facilities and established free libraries. Mann was quoted as saying, "Education . . . beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of conditions of men—the balance wheel of the social machinery . . . It does better than to disarm the poor of their hostility toward the rich; it prevents being poor."

Critics of Mann, like Hilary J. Moss, an associate professor of Black Studies and History at Amherst College in Boston assert that Mann and others were opposed to equal education for Blacks and whites.

> Education reformers argued for support of public schools as a way to produce active citizens and a highly trained working class. But since blacks were excluded from the body politic and most of the skilled labor force, neither argument

> necessitated the education of black children, and certainly did not dictate the same quality of education for blacks as for whites.[96]

Mann's writings, as they appeared in the 1852 edition of *The Common School Journal* offered a different view:

> We have contended that is clearly the duty of government – to see that the whole people are educated, - but that duty has been sadly neglected by both the general and state government . . . every child of which has an equal right to an education and to an education equal to the best. If education is necessary to the security of prosperity, the progress of civilization, and the salvation, to say nothing of the perfection of our civil and religious institutions, then we do hold the government responsible for the education of every child . . .[97]

Even though it is unclear if Mann's school reform efforts included children of African descendant, his assessment of government had sadly neglected its duty to provide that every child deserved an equal right to an education. This was precisely the reason that caused Benjamin F. Roberts to file a lawsuit (1849) against the Boston School Committee for their refusal to admit his five-year-old daughter, Sarah, to a white school (after he had submitted previous request for admission.) Roberts lost his claim; a claim that served to establish the principle of separate but equal. Roberts' attorney, Charles Summer, an anti-slavery advocate argued, unsuccessfully, that the Massachusetts Constitution and Massachusetts case law both required the equal treatment of all citizens. In 1855, the Massachusetts legislature outlawed segregation in schools.

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[96]Mary Niall Mitchell Review of Moss, Hilary J., *Schooling Citizens: The Struggle for African American Education in Antebellum America,* http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=29613 (accessed August 2012).

[97]Horace Mann, ed. Wm. B. Fowle, *The Common School Journal and Education Reformer, New Series for the Year 1852,* Vol. XIV (Boston, MA: Morris Cotton, 1852).

Religious groups continued to be responsible for many of the schools for advanced studies were organized during this time period and it appears that the Methodist denomination was at the forefront.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church purchased 120 acres of land (1844) in Ohio and in co-operation with the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, established Wilberforce University in 1856; making it the first private college of higher education for African Americans.

> Wilberforce University was forced to close temporarily in 1862, when a number of its patrons and students became involved in the American Civil War, supporting and joining the Union Army. In 1863 the African Methodist Episcopal Church, through the efforts of Bishop Daniel A. Payne, acquired ownership of the university and reopened it as a private university. Payne became the university's first president and the first African American college president in the United States. During his thirteen years in the position, he assembled a diverse faculty to train students in teaching, theology, and the practice of law.[98]

The AME Church's commitment to the education of former slaves and their children is well documented. In 1865, the church opened Western University in Kansas as one of the earliest schools from blacks west of the Mississippi. The school struggled during the Great Depression, as did other colleges and universities, and was finally forced to close its doors in 1943. The following year, in 1866, Edward Waters College opened its doors in Jacksonville, Florida. This institution is still operating to serve the educational needs of students from around the world. Paul Quinn College was organized by a small group of AME preachers in Austin, Texas in 1872. Paul Quinn was ". . . a trade school where newly freed slaves were taught the skills of blacksmithing, carpentry,

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[98]Blackpast.org: *Remembered and Reclaimed* - An Online Resource Guide to African American History. Wilberforce University (1856). http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/wilberforce-university-1856 (accessed Aiugust 2012).

tanning and saddle work."[99] Skills that would most certainly assist newly freed slaves in becoming viable, productive members of society. The march to provide educational facilities continued in 1886 when Shorter College in Arkansas was opened under the name of Bethel University.

The American Civil War (1861–1865) was a civil war that began when eleven (11) southern states declared their secession from the United States over attempts to limit the expansion of slavery to the states where it already existed. After four years of intense battle, the South surrendered and slavery was abolished. This began a period known as the Reconstruction era and resulted in many changes that had a positive impact an enslaved people. The Civil War presented an incredible opportunity for those opposed to slavery to extend their support to the slaves by providing educational opportunities.

The Penn School, located near Beaufort, South Carolina began in 1862 just prior to the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. It was apparently one of several schools established on St. Helena Island as part of the Port Royal Experiment.

> The leaders of the Port Royal Experiment were: "primarily philanthropists, abolitionists, and missionaries from Pennsylvania. They came to the Beaufort area after Union soldiers took control of the Port Royal Sound and forced the Confederates to flee, and their purpose was to help abandoned slaves prepare for freedom by teaching them how to read and survive economically.[100]

The Union Troops were also obliged to assist in preparing hundreds of slaves for their new life. According to researchers, Alex Sandifer and Berry Dishong Renfer:

> When Union forces led by General Ambrose Burnside captured the Outer Banks in 1862, hundreds of coastal slaves sought protection behind Union Lines.

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[99]Paul Quinn College *About PQC History 1: 1872-1970 Presidents*, http://www.pqc.edu (accessed August 2012).

[100]SCIWAY: South Carolina Information Highway Web Site. *Penn Center – St. Helena Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina*, http://www.sciway.net/afam/penn.htm. (accessed August 2012).

> Burnside put Vincent Colyer, an army captain in charge of taking café of these escaped slaves. . . . Colyer knew that just helping the escaped slaves with their temporary daily needs was not enough. They needed preparation for lives as free citizens after the war – they needed education. So, on July 23, 1863, Colyer established the first school for freed people in North Carolina. This school was on Roanoke Island. Another was soon opened in New Bern. Both were taught by soldiers who volunteered their free time.[101]

In a similar effort by the military forces, Richard Henry Pratt, an army captain who had led a Calvary of freeman and recently freed slaves, founded Carlisle Indian Industrial School. The school was the first off-reservation government boarding school for Native American Indian children.

Freedom was a doubled-edge sword. On one side, freedom meant slaves would have an opportunity to participate in all of the benefits of society, to live, work and get an education. However, because of the harsh restrictions of slavery on their ability to obtain an education, there entrance into a free world would not be without its challenges.

> The attitude of the South toward the education of the freedmen was determined not only by the traditional attitudes toward the status of the Negro but also by the outlook and interest of the various groups that emerged as a result of the collapse of the traditional class structure which gave rise to the three elements in southern society.[102]
>
> There were essentially three groups with varying points of views. At one extreme was a conservative group that was opposed to providing education for the slaves and that they should be returned to their position of servitude. At the opposite end of the spectrum were southern whites who supported Reconstruction and who worked to established public schools during the early years of Reconstruction. The moderates on the issue of education for slaves were willing to provide some education in order to secure a stable and reliable labor supply.[103]

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[101]Sandifer, Alex and Renfer, Berry Dishong, *School for Freed People*, 2005 North Carolina Museum of History, Office fo Archives, N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. http://www.learnnc .org/lp/editions/nchist-civilwar/4439 (accessed August 2012).

[102]Franklin E. Frazier, *The Negro in the United States* (New York, NY: McMillan Publishing Company, 1957), 421.

[103]Ibid.

Once the Civil War ended, the government's response was to organize the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands to help freedmen adjust to their new status. Missionaries and other societies continued to send funds and teachers to aid in the adjustment process. "The necessity of the education of the freedmen was recognized by General Banks in Louisiana who was the first to make a systematic effort to establish a regular system of free public schools for Negro children.[104]

The American Missionary Association (AMA) played a major role in setting up grammar schools and colleges dedicated to training Black teachers. By 1866, the AMA had chartered seven institutions for higher learning: Berea College, in Kentucky; Fisk University, in Tennessee; Atlanta University, in Georgia; Hampton Institute, in Virginia; Talladega College, in Alabama; Tougaloo University, in Mississippi; Straight University, now known as Dillard, in Louisiana. The American Missionary Association also aided in the establishment of Howard University.

> By 1879, 150,000 pupils in the South were being taught by graduates of American Missionary Association normal schools and colleges. And by 1888, the Association' schools had educated 7,000 teachers. In addition to training teachers, these schools had two other purposes. They were to demonstrate conclusively that African Americans were capable of mastering higher education and they were to provide African American leaders who might assist their people in the struggle for equal rights.[105]

The Federal Department of Education was created in 1867 to collect and report the "condition and progress of education" in annual reports to Congress. In the first report of 1870, the Commissioner proudly reported, "nearly 7 million children were enrolled in

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[104]Horace M. Bond, The *Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1934), 443.

[105]Amistad Research Center; An essay written by Leroy Sullivan. American Missionary Association/Amistad Research. 26 <http://www.amistadresearch center.org /archon/?p=creators /creator&id=27 (accessed August 2012).

elementary schools and 80,000 were enrolled in secondary schools [about 35 percent of the population was 5- to 17 years old]. Also some 9,000-college degrees had been illiterate, and 80 percent of the Black population was illiterate (measured as a fundamental level of reading and writing.)

If education was indeed the great equalizer as defined by Horace Mann, then there was significant work to be done, particularly in the Southern states. They were largely opposed to providing education for slaves and did not want to see former slaves gain any rights previously denied them including recognition as a citizen. Up to this point, slaves were only considered 3/5ths of a person and the personal property of the slave owners. This status would have to be resolved in order to advance education for those persons who had been previously denied.

Congress of the Thirteenth Amendment finally abolished slavery in 1865 with the passage. Three years later (1868), Congress ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship and equal protection under the laws:

> All persons born or naturalized in the United States," thereby granting citizenship to former slaves. Another equally important provision was the statement that "nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.[106]

With the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 guaranteeing Blacks the right to vote, that they were poised to become fully functioning members of society. However, the nation struggled with the new rights that had been granted to Blacks, specifically as it related to meeting the educational demands. How to fund educational opportunities was at the heart of the struggle. There was reluctance to use public funds to

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[106]U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Civil Rights (1868), http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=43 (accessed August 2012).

support the education of Blacks. As a consequence, a variety of methods were used to fund schools such as using taxes paid by Blacks to only educate Black children. Obviously, this would have a disparate impact on the quality of education since Blacks in the South had been deprived the chance to learn to read or write for over two hundred years. Other schemes involved establishing a certification process for determining how teachers would be paid. This formula resulted in Black teachers being paid at a lower rate than whites. The facilities were better maintained in white schools than in schools for blacks. There were attempts to have blacks and white attend school together. This arrangement was quickly abandoned when problems erupted between the students and whites boycotted the schools.

Two Supreme Court decisions served to condone the practice of *segregation* Blacks and white: *Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)* [107] and *Cumming v. Board of Ed. of Richmond County.* [108] Homer Plessy boarded a passenger train in Louisiana and sat in a white railcar. When asked to move to the Black railcar by the conductor, he refused. Plessy argued that he had a right to sit in the white railcar under the Fourteenth Amendment. Plessy lost his claim when the court ruled that segregation was legal to provide separate facilities for Blacks and whites as long as the facilities for Black were not inferior to whites. This ruling gave rise to the doctrine of separate but equal.

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[107]FindLaw: PLESSY v. FERGUSON, 163 U.S. 537 (1896) http://laws.findlaw. com/us/ 163/537.html (accessed August 2012).

[108]FindLaw: CUMMING v. BOARD OF ED. OF RICHMOND COUNTY, 175 U.S. 528 (1899) http://laws.findlaw.com/us/175/528.html (accessed August 2012).

In the second decision (1899), the Supreme Court ruled in *Cumming v. Board of Ed. of Richmond County*[109] that the board was not authorized to levy taxes on Blacks and white in support of a school system that did provide the same educational facilities for Blacks as were available to the white schools. Once again, despite protections under the Fourteenth Amendment, the Supreme Court ruled against Cummings.

These Supreme Court decisions gave rise to the states to enact laws that served to diminish, withhold, or discount the rights of people of color. As our society matured, the legal system replaced the Bible as the basis used to determine how its members would be treated. Where the Bible had been used to *condemn or condone* slavery, the legal system was poised to *affirm* or *deny* an individual's rights and privileges under the notion that justice was blind.

For every action or positive step taken to create an educational system that supported the principle that every child, regardless of race, class or gender, was entitled to an equal education there were equally negative forces at play that eventually created a system of education that was separate and [woefully] unequal; particularly for Blacks. This phenomenon of *progress and retrenchment* has been identified as a characteristic of structural racism.[110]

> Perhaps the most discouraging characteristic of structural racism is its adaptability and resilience. The forces that permit structural racism to endure are dynamic and shift with the times. As progress is made toward racial equity on a particular policy front, a backlash may develop on another front that could undo or undermine any gains. Or powerful interests may move to preserve the racial order

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[109]Ibid.

[110]The term *structural racism* refers to a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity.

> in other ways. The net effect tends to be a repositioning of the color line rather than its erasure.[111]

According to the Anti-Defamation League:

> Racism is the belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another, that a person's social and moral traits are predetermined by his or her inborn biological characteristics. Racial separatism is the belief, most of the time based on racism, that different races should remain segregated and apart from one another.[112]

Racial separatism or segregation plagued our society for several decades; though laws had passed affording blacks the same rights of citizenship as whites. The North had its own struggles as a result of the great migration of Blacks who left the Southern states for seeking better housing, educational and employment opportunities. While not explicitly stated, the North had *de facto* segregation as there were challenges in housing (mortgage lending discrimination) and employment (limited access to union jobs.)

The South was not willing to concede its attitudes towards Black or its acceptance of their newly bestowed freedoms. Instead, the South enacted a series laws, known as Jim Crows laws, which enforced racial segregation and reinforced the whites belief that they were intellectually and socially superior to blacks. The Jim Crow laws strictly prohibited Blacks and whites from living, working or worshipping together. It also precluded Blacks from attending the same schools. The schools for Black children attended were sub-standard at every level, except for the dedication and commitment of the teachers the schools were typically poorly equipped and maintained.

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[111]Keith Lawrence, Stacey Sutton, Anne Kubisch, Gretchen Susi and Karen Fulbright-Anderson, "Structural Racism and Community Building," Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change (Washington, D.C.: The Aspen Institute, 2004), 25.

[112]Anti-Defamation League Racism, www.adl.org/racism (accessed August 2012).

Inequalities in education persisted and expanded to include other racial minorities, Asians, Hispanics (or Latinos) and Native Americans. As those in opposition had predicted, Blacks (as other minorities) became frustrated with the status of educational opportunities began to use the court systems to seek redress. In 1935, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began challenging segregation through the courts. Several cases were filed in the courts based on the equal protection clause (Fourteenth Amendment.) It was not until the historic Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v Board of Education* [113] that the conditions of the public school system in America would change.

Reverend Oliver Brown was a railroad welder and assistant pastor at St. Mark AME Church in Topeka, Kansas. Brown attempted to register his eight-year-old daughter in a white school near his home. When his attempt failed, Brown and several other parents filed a lawsuit against the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. After a series of legal maneuverings, four other cases from Delaware, the District of Columbia, South Carolina and Virginia were combined on the docket of the Supreme Court in 1952. All of the cases challenged the constitutionally of racial segregation in public schools.

The *dream* team of lawyers including Thurgood Marshall presented passionate and ultimately, persuasive arguments before the court in 1952 and 1953. When the Supreme Court issued its first ruling on May 17, 1954, it affirmed that separate schools (on the basis of race) were inherently unequal. In *Brown II,* the Supreme Court ordered the federal courts to require desegregation with all deliberate speed.

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[113]FindLaw: BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) http://laws.findlaw .com/us/347/483.html (accessed August 2012).

In hindsight, the responses of school districts around the country were predictable, particularly in view of the structural racism characteristic of progress and retrenchment. The hope of *Brown* would dwindle as States sought ways to defy the new law of the land. As an example, in 1959, the Prince Edward County (Virginia) Board of Supervisors decided to withhold funding for their public schools rather than integrate them. Instead, Prince Edward County provided tuition grants to its students (Blacks or whites), but this action only benefited white students, as there were no private schools for blacks to attend.

Closer to home, the Florida Legislature adopted the "Interposition Resolution in Response to *Brown v. Board of Education*, 1957"[114] asserting that the U.S. Supreme Court usurped the state constitutional powers, and declared the Court's decision as null and void.

Undeterred by the action of the Florida Legislature to ignore *Brown*, the NAACP filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court on behalf of two students in Jacksonville, Florida who had been denied admission to a white school. The lawsuit claimed that the schools race was used to determine school placement and that the schools were racially segregated. Eventually, officials would acknowledge that the school district operated eighty-nine white and twenty-four Black schools that were totally separated by students, teachers and administrators. The school district would be ordered, in 1962 to stop operating its dual school system and to develop a plan to integrate the schools. Between 1962 and 1969 several significant events occur: the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools threatens and finally withdraws accreditation of fifteen schools; a two day boycott of the schools is initiated by the NAACP and supported by the

[114]Florida Department of State, Division of Library & Information Services Interposition Resolution in Response to Brown v. Board of Education, 1957, http://www.floridamemory.com/exhibits/floridahighlights/collins/page10.php (accessed August 2012).

Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (17,000 students stay home on day one; 10,000 on day 2), a U.S. District Judge order integration of teachers based on a ratio of seventy white and thirty Black. Such actions used to force integration had unintended consequences on the quality of education that was being provided.

Integration had a negative impact on the achievement of Black students in several ways. Of primary concern was decrease in parental involvement in the educational life of their children since they were being bused outside of the community to achieve artificial measures of integration. Secondly, the removal of neighborhood schools reduced the religious and community support that had been organically provided to students and the sense of community pride was denigrated with the closure of schools in the Black community. Lastly, the removal of black teachers diminished the positive, psychological and emotional encouragement students were accustomed to receiving in spite of the quality of the educational facilities.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was leaving his position as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1959, he reportedly had a conversation with two congregants: John Feagan, Sr. and his wife who were members of the church and local school educators. According to Feagan, the conversation turned to the subject of the desegregation of schools. King's words, as recounted later by Feagan in a book about the church were:

> I favor integration on buses and in all areas of public accommodation and travel," King said. "I am for equality. However, I think integration in our public schools is different. In that setting, you are dealing with one of the most important assets of an individual -- the mind. White people view Black people as inferior. A large percentage of them have a very low opinion of our race. People with such a low

> view of the Black race cannot be given free rein and put in charge of the intellectual care and development of our boys and girls.[115]

King had a right to be concerned. The fight to make *Brown* a reality would be a long and not without its consequences. There's an African proverbs which says: "When two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers." The battle in this instant was between government and society as government intervened to fulfill the commitment to provide quality education to *all* children and societal forces that were unrelenting in its efforts to deny that benefit to Blacks. Regrettably, in this scenario the children represent the grass.

There is evidence that desegregation had has numerous benefits: diversity among the student body better prepares them to function in an increasingly diverse workforce and society. To some degree, the negative outcomes of desegregation can be attributed to the demise of the inner city as commerce and neighborhoods changed. In her book, *Guide My Feet: Prayers and Meditations For Our Children*, Marian Wright Edelman describes an environment during her childhood "when family, church, the extended community, and teachers provided a seamless web of support for Black children."[116]

It is not the researcher's intent to blame the victim but only to suggest that the pursuit of the benefits of an education had its unintended consequences. Anecdotal evidence supports Dr. King's concern about delegating the responsibility of the development of Black children to white teachers. Many students experienced what could be described as benign neglect as some teachers (white) failed to provide a positive

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[115]Samuel G. Freedman, *Still Separate, Still Unequal,* The New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/16/books/still-separate-still-unequal.html. (accessed August 2012).

[116]Marian Wright Edelman, *Guide My Feet: Prayers and Meditations For Our Children* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1995), xiv.

learning environment for their students. Over time, the attempts to achieve racial diversity in schools overshadowed the real goal which was to achieve educational excellence.

The impact that education has on a child's ability to develop into a productive member of society is well documented. Nothing is more important to a child's long-term educational achievement than his or her ability to learn to read or write. Children who enter school with early skills are more likely to experience academic success, attain higher levels of education, and secure employment.[117] The earlier the educational process begins the likelihood that a child will excel in life is greatly improved; as reported by the Shubert Center for Child Studies:

> Research has established a clear link between children's academic achievement and their long-term success. Children's academic performance and educational attainment are tied to income and employment status later in life. Additionally, we know that early academic performance is a good predictor of later performance. For example, children who do well academically are more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college than those who do not.[118]

Unfortunately, studies also reveal that race remains a powerful predictor of success in schools. In a 2002 study, "Beyond the Talk: Improving Race Relations", the Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. (JCCI) found that differences in education results between Blacks and white, i.e. disparities in graduation rates, reading scores, dropout rates and test scores, are made worse by disparities in income.

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[117]Child Trends (2010). *Early School Readiness*. www.childtrendsbank.org (assessed August 29, 2010).

[118]Schubert Center for Child Studies, Case Western University, Report by Eric Pl Bettinger. *Improving Academic Achievement: The Effect of Financial Incentives on Elementary School Test Scores* Policy Brief 4, March 2007 http://schubertcenter.case.edu/research_policy_briefs.aspx (accessed August 2012).

Over the years, there have been mandates at the federal and state levels to improve the quality of education. The Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965 constituted an important educational component of the War on Poverty launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson. This Act made allocated special funding (Title I) to school systems to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged children. The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) was designed as a tool to measure student learning as well as school achievement. Critics of the FCAT believe the test changed the dynamics of teaching because of the emphasis on the school achieving a passing grade. The purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is to "ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments."[119] The results have been mixed, and the results are inconsistent. While the "elephants fight . . . the grass suffers!"[120]

As evidenced by the past, it is incumbent upon the church to renew its commitment to recreate the seamless web of support for *all* children, principally for children who live in poverty, which is typically interpreted to mean African Americans. Recreating the seamless web of support can be best accomplished by establishing educational facilities that address the five dimensions of school readiness as conceptualized by the National Education Goals Panel: (1) physical well-being and motor development; (2) social and emotional development; (3) approaches to learning; (4)

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[119]U.S. Department of Education. Policy Overivew: Education and Secondary Legislation. http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ110/pdf/PLAW-107publ110.pdf (accessed August 2012).

[120]Traditional Proverbs. www.resourcepage.gambia.dk (assessed August 8, 2010).

language development (including early literacy); and (5) cognition and general knowledge.[121]

The researcher recognized the need to educate children at an early age and therefore, established the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center in order to help boost school readiness. In an effort to develop an effective early learning program for children birth through kindergarten, (infancy to five years of age) emphasis were placed upon the cognitive, affective, physical, social, emotional and spiritual domains of learning. In addition to the domains of learning, careful attention was placed on designing a program that is sensitive to the needs of the children being served as well as emphasis placed upon family involvement to include parent training.

We live in a society whereby public education is the mainstay of our culture. Unfortunately, many students are failing to meet the stated standards of a basic education. There is a high dropout rate among African American students. Students have a disregard for the stated operating policies and procedures and oftentimes resort to using violent measures to defend themselves or to voice their opinions. Likewise, parents are failing to become involved with the education of their child (ren), leaving all decisions to school authorities to solely determine next-steps for their child's lives. It is apparent that something has gone drastically wrong and the researcher is of the strong opinion that ultimately, the African American child will suffer the majority of what's gone wrong if the African American church does not step to the forefront to combat these injustices.

In view of all that has taken place and is currently happening with our children, it is apparent that there is a need to develop effective educational institutions that will

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[121]Child Trends Data Bank. *Early School Readiness*. (2010). Retrieved from www.childtrends databank.org/?q=node/291 (accessed August 2012).

meet the biblical mandate of "training a child in the way he or she should go." There are some individuals who believe that children should be reared within the confines of the family unit and then be transitioned into care programs when they are able to effectively communicate answers to the, who, what, when, where and how of their day. There are others who believe that children can greatly benefit from learning in environments outside of the home setting that promote cognitive and socialization skill development.

While there are studies that exist to support both of these opposing sides, there remains a deep concern in the minds of those who support the belief that the African American child, particularly male, is disenfranchised within the midst of these controversial points of view. Jwanza Kunjufu's books, *Countering the Conspiracy To Destroy Black Boys Volumes I, II and III* supports the call to the clarion cry that there is a need to stop the educational genocide of the African American male. Whatever the controversy, it is clear that there is a strong need to establish effective early learning environments whether home or center based, that is supportive of the cultural, social, emotional and diverse needs of its client with emphasis being placed on the cognitive, affective, physical, social, emotional and spiritual domains of learning as well as strong family involvement. Kunjufu supports that "you cannot teach a child you do not love. You cannot teach a child you do not respect. You cannot teach a child you do not understand."[122]

Reform and accountability, concepts that were generally used only in the K-12 public education arena, are now being applied to early education. This represents a fundamental change in early education. Childcare has changed from providing basic

[122]Jawankza Kunjufu. *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys, Vols. 1-4* (Chicago, IL: African American Images, 2004), 67.

custodial care to emphasizing early learning as a meaningful opportunity for positive educational outcomes for all children, especially those at risk. According to Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, and Mann cited in Shore's book, *Child Outcome Standards in Pre-K Programs: What are Standards. What Is Needed To Make Them Work*, "This case for public investment in early education has been strengthened by evidence that preschool programs can boost school readiness in the short-run and, in the long run, improve graduation rates, increase adult earnings, and lower crime rates."[123]

In Florida, early education standards appeared in 2000 when the Florida State Board of Education was presented with the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards for Three, Four and Five year-old-children. In 2002 Florida voters approved an amendment to the State Constitution that required the development of performance standards for children served in VPK programs. Additionally, The Florida Birth to Three Learning and Developmental Standards describe age-appropriate knowledge related to the way children think, explore, create, and reason as they engage in the learning process.

"Education standards are used to provide children with a coherent educational experience and to describe the kinds of development and learning that should be taking place. Child-outcome standards define expectations for children's development and learning. The two types of standards are most often referred to in Florida is content standards and performance standards. Content standards address the range of knowledge and skills that children should master. Performance standards describe how children can demonstrate that they have mastered the content standards. The intended outcomes of

[123]R. E. Shore, Bodrova and D. Leong, "Child Outcome Standards in Pre-K Programs: What are Standards. What Is Needed To Make Them Work?" *Preschool Policy Matters*, No. 5. 2004.

using standards are to improve the odds that early learning programs will boost school readiness and to lay a solid foundation for later achievement."[124]

"When using standards, teachers should be able to determine what each child knows and understands, and should use that information to plan appropriate and varied learning opportunities."[125] "Teachers need to have clear learning goals, plan activities carefully to achieve those goals, assess children's learning regularly, and modify instruction when activities are not helping children to learn. Educational standards and curriculum are essential components of high-quality early education. Curriculum should be developed based on children's ages, learning needs and cultural background as well as teachers' experiences and opportunities for professional development."[126]

All teachers should receive training on the purpose and application of the early learning standards. Standards should be utilized not as curriculum, but to guide curriculum decisions. Curriculum used in preschool classrooms should be developmentally appropriate, derived from research and address the domains of development. Benchmarks should be used to plan appropriate learning opportunities for children. Learning opportunities for young children should address content standards (what children should know) as well as performance standards (what children should be able to do).

While consideration for standards-based instruction is very important, understanding the diversity that exist among the children being taught is also very important. Amos Wilson's book entitled, *The Developmental Psychology of The Black*

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[124]Shore, *PreSchool Policy Matters.*

[125]Stipek, 2006

[126]Frede & Ackerman

Child vividly describes the general thinking that what is good for the white child, particularly the white middle class child, is good for the Black child. It further implies that the middle class white child represents all that is superior and that the Black child would profit by the close imitation of his white counterpart, thus this often becomes the optimal standard by which the African American child is measured. The question however becomes, how can a fair evaluation of one's' abilities as a person be based upon something that is imitated?

Amos Wilson's book entitled: *Awakening the Natural Genius of Black Children* defines the purpose of Education as follows:

"The major function of education is to help secure the survival of a people."[127] When one considers all of the controversy that surrounds the concern for early learning environments, all of the aforementioned should be taken into consideration. It becomes clear that the church must forge ahead to create learning for children that will address their learning needs as well as those of their parent(s) and the community from which they come. The researcher believes that quality early education is pivotal to a child's academic success in elementary, middle, and high school.

Beyond the academic requirements, the African Methodist Episcopal Church has an obligation to ensure the spiritual growth and development of children consistent with the baptismal convent, which dictates that children should be taught as soon as they are able to learn and to lead them into the love of God and the service of Lord Jesus Christ. The researcher believes that if we are to reclaim and educate our children then, as the church, it is our duty to fulfill the commandment as found in Deuteronomy 6:5-8:

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[127]Amos Wilson, *Awakening the Natural Genius of Black Children*.

> So love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength. Memorize his laws and tell them to your children over and over again. Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning. Write down copies and tie them to your wrists and foreheads to help you obey them.[128]

Theological Foundation

Robert McAfee Brown states that there is a new way of doing theology, which emerged from Latin America, called liberation theology. Brown believes that "liberation theology radically challenges traditional concepts and practices of who does theology, of how theology is done and where theology is done and what the focus of liberation theology ought to be. In the past, we have viewed theology been accomplished by the experts, who although they sometimes worked in the heat of the battle, more often worked in the relative calm and detachment of the seminary or university, using texts of the past as their basic resources, producing large and scholarly tomes of "systematic theology, replete with footnotes, foreign phrases, and intricate arguments that could conserve and interpret the past for the sake of the present."[129]

McAfee Brown describes liberation theology as an "attempt to look at the world in terms of involvement with the under-privileged and oppressed, and to find within the Christian gospel both the analytic tools and the energizing power to work for radical change in that world."[130] According to McAfee Brown, "Theology is 'critical reflection

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[128]Dt 6: 5-8.

[129]Robert McAfee Brown, *Liberation Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 37.

[130]Gerald H. Anderson, Thomas F. Stransky. *Mission Trends NO. 4 Liberation Theologies* (Grand Rapids MI: Paulist Fathers, Inc. and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1979), 3.

on praxis in the light of the Word of God.' If we break that statement down into its component parts it is not so threatening."[131]

Gardner C. Taylor shares that, "Theology is a reflection, and consideration of what God has done, not an act of God in and of itself. Theological study seeks to interpret and understand revelation."[132]A study of theology is seeking God. It is obtaining a better understanding of the God one serves through their faith. Theology is important in every environment. God reveals himself in education because He is the creator of all things.

This section will provide a theological foundation for the researcher's thesis that African American children and parents can be liberated through education. In this project it is the desire of the researcher to understand the importance of education from the perspective of our faith

James R. Estep in the book entitled, *A Theology of Christian Education*, states in order for "Christian education to be educational, it requires the theories, teaching task, and target: but for Christian education to be Christian it requires a theological determinant with a profound influence in the life and ministry of the Christian education."[133] Theology has been defined as "that discipline that strives to give a coherent statement of the doctrine of the faith, based primarily on the scripture, placed in the context of culture in general, worded in a contemporary idiom, and related to the issues of life."[134]

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[131]Brown, *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide*, 37.

[132]Gardner C. Taylor, *Faith in the Fire: Wisdom for Life* (New York, NY: SmileyBooks, 2011), 5.

[133]James R. Estep, Jr., Michael J. Anthony, Gregg R. Allison *A Theology for Christian Education* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 1984), 6.

[134]Ibid., 11.

> Theology in a Christian context is a discipline of study that seeks to understand the God revealed in the Bible and to provide a Christian understanding of reality. It seeks to understand God's creation, particularly human beings and their condition, and God's redemptive work in relation to human kind. Biblical, historical, and philosophical theology provide insights and understandings that help lead toward a coherent whole. Theology has practical value in providing guidance for the Christian life and ministry.[135]

Elmer Towns state, "the term theology comes from the Greek compound theologia derived from two roots, theo (God) and logos (word" or idea). Theology originally meant an idea concerning God. The original term fell into two categories. Theology could be sayings about God, or the actual sayings, or discourses by God or the gods."[136]

> In giving a theological reflection, in the book, *A Theology of Liberation*, Gutierrez states Theology is in intrinsic to a life of faith seeking to be authentic and complete and is, therefore, essential to the common consideration of this faith in the ecclesial community. There is present in all believers—and more so in every Christian community—a rough outline of theology. There is at present an effort to understand the faith, something like a pre-understanding of that faith which is manifested in life, action, and concrete attitude.[137]

Like, Gutierrez, it is the desire of the researcher to understand the importance of education from the perspective of our faith. The researcher believes a person cannot have a full understanding of oneself without the knowledge of God. Floyd H. Barackman describes knowledge as "knowing all that can be known. God knows all about us, our thoughts, actions, conditions, circumstances, feelings, and motivations."[138] Psalm 139: describes knowledge this way:

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[135]Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 17.

[136]Elmer L. Towns, *Theology for Today* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning 2002), 6.

[137]Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 3.

[138]Floyd H. Barackman. *Practical Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001), 53.

> O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.[139]

Thus the premise of this paper is education, which is accomplished through the metric of liberation theology. Don Berg in his article provides the definition of education as "merely the delivery of knowledge, skills, and information from teacher to students."[140]

Erickson states, "The word education means more than a course of study at college. Education begins with the infant in its mother's arms. While the mother is molding and fashioning the character, she is educating them."[141] Another expert states, "Parents send their children to school; and when they have done this, they think they have educated them. But education is a matter of greater breath than many realize: it comprises the whole process by which the child is instructed from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood. As soon as a child is capable of forming an idea, his education should begin."[142]

As Erickson points out, then becomes the question of trust, he states: "The child develops his basic sense of trust and mistrust in the first eighteen months of life. Before children understand what it means to trust God, they have formulated feelings and

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[139]Psalm 139: 1-6 (NIV).

[140]Don Berg, *Definition of Education,* www.teach-kids-attitude-1st.com (accessed May 2010).

[141]Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York, NY: Norton, 1963), 297.

[142]Ibid., 297.

attitudes about trust."[143] The researcher then suggest that parents possess the greatest influence in teaching a child theological concepts. A child's home void of spiritual practices and conversation will hinder the child morally. The researcher believes the greatest reward for parents is to witness the spiritual growth of their child in conjunction with educational knowledge about their world. "Extensive studies indicate that early stimulation of a baby's sense actually increase the child's intelligence."[144]

What is Christian education? Theologian, Estep proposes "Christian education is an application of social science theories regarding learning, development, and behavior, so it is a social science."[145] J. M. Lee argues Christian education is different and "advocates that Christian education is like any other education, so it should draw direction and identity from the social sciences upon which he based his approach."[146] Dr. Bennie Eugene Goodwin II states:

> Christian Education is a process of dialogue in which Christian ideas and ideals are presented by way of symbols and symbolic acts with the intention of influencing persons toward purposeful, helpful, and joyful living. Dr. Goodwin furthers states that Christian Education is a dialogical process. Dialogue is a two way communicative process that takes place between two or more persons who are honestly attempting to think and talk together about a common subject. The exciting zenith of the dialogical process in education is reached when the student and teacher participates jointly in what Brazilian educator Paulo Freire called "praxis." At this point there is thinking, talking and action. This is Christian education's most productive stage. The founder of Christianity set an unexcellable example of praxis. Jesus not only analyzed humanity's situation and verbalized

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[143]Ibid., 86.

[144]Grace Ketterman and Herbert Ketterman, *The Complete Book of Baby and Child Care for Christian Parents* (Old Tappan: Revell, 1982), 149.

[145]Ibid., 288.

[146]J. M. Lee, *The Context of Religious Instruction* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1985), 296.

> the acceptance of God's love as the solution but, actualized man's deliverance by offering His life as the necessary sacrifice. He was the model Christian Educator in precept and example, word and deed.[147]

The researcher also suggests that Christian education is different and agrees with Dr. Goodwin that the goal of Christian education is not to reproduce little Jesus, but rather to bring ordinary human beings into an awareness of the reality of God's love by verbalizing and dramatizing that love in daily life, and doing it in such a way that ordinary lives are positively and continually transformed.[148]

The researcher asserts that the foundation for education must start at the beginning, and the players, specifically parents, in the process should not rest solely on a public education system, which is the reason the researcher created an early learning center. Douglas Wilson in his book, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education*, supports the position of the researcher that Christian schools exist to "promote, establish, and equip schools committed to a classical approach to education in the light of a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures."[149] Therefore, the researcher supports the belief that "we have Christian education to provide an ecology wherein Christians can mature into full Christ likeness through the educational process."[150] Then the function of Christian education is what James R. Estep states:

> Christian educators have sought to identify Christian education through its theoretical framework, its task of teaching, and its target of facilitating spiritual

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[147]Bennie E. Goodwin, *Reflections on Education* (Goodpatrick Publishers, 1978), 108-109.

[148]Ibid., 110.

[149]Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 38.

[150]Ibid., 298.

> formation in believers. In fact, since these are not mutually exclusive, their interplay in the literature of Christian education is quite prevalent for example, how developmental theories inform the process of spiritual formation, how teaching must be for the purpose of facilitating spiritual formation, or how learning theories relate to teaching methodologies.[151]

Clark, Brubaker, and Zuck gave this brief background on public schools:

> According to the Research Center for Education, as schools proliferated in the early United States, McGuffey's Electric Readers, which consisted of collection of stories used to educate and transmit moral lessons, were the most widely read books in the 19th –century America outside of the King James Bible. The readers were used as school textbooks and were designed to instill biblical values and train good workers by preaching sobriety, thrift, responsibility, and self-restraint. But the influence of McGuffey's Readers waned in the early 20th century because of their reliance on religious precepts and because of changes in the way society viewed morality.[152]

The researcher believes that most inner city children suffer neglect; their parents lack education and financial resources to improve their standard of living. He believes this can contribute to a parent's indifference. The researcher also asserts that schools have a significant social influence and may have greater effect on a child than the parent. One researcher wrote:

> But students learn much more in school than measures of achievement can detect. The social statuses open students, the kinds of jobs they will hold, the incomes they can expect, their mental health, their marriage, and family life, and their social attitudes and values are all affected by their school experiences. These outcomes may be termed the social impact of education.[153]

It must be noted for the purpose of this project the significance of early learning with its social context is important. During the 1960s, the government in an attempt to

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[151]Ibid., 249.

[152]Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker, and Roy B. Zuck, *Childhood Education in the Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 27.

[153]Dorothy Westby-Gibson, *Social Perspectives on Education* (New York, NY: Wiley Publishing, 1965), 357.

address poverty and its impact on early learning created the Head Start program. The program initially started as an after school program. However today, the Head Start program is

> Part of the government's thinking on poverty was influenced by new research on the effects of poverty, as well as on the impacts of education. This research indicated an obligation to help disadvantaged groups, compensating for inequality in social or economic conditions. Head Start was designed to help break the cycle of poverty, providing preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs. A key tenet of the program established that it be culturally responsive to the communities served, and that the communities have an investment in its schools through the contribution of volunteer hours and other donations as nonfederal share.[154]

Comparably, the researcher believes to boost school readiness and address the growing dropout rate of students due to economic status, an integrated cognitive learning model with a biblical foundation is necessary. Researchers, Clark and Brubaker explain and support the researchers' belief when they explain:

> Of great significance are the first intellectual and emotional experiences of early childhood. Through the process of attachment or bonding during first few days and months after birth, the child builds a special relation with his or her parents or with a primary caregiver. As the parent's hold, touch, caress, and talk to the child, a bonding of love and an expression of emotional feelings will be shared through a mutual relationship between the infant and the parents. Attachment is important because it is through this process the child learns to build a sense of trust in others. This early relationship carries over into later life and will help the child adjust to others positively as his or her world expands emotionally and socially.[155]

This explains the researchers' context, which is a historical African American church, located in an African American community. The researcher as pastor is not only seen as preacher, church, and community leader, he is also recognized as an educator and

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[154]Author Unknown, History of Head Start. www.transition.acf.hhs.gov (accessed August 2011).

[155]Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker and Roy B. Zuck, *Childhood Education in the Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 26.

an advocate of education, which begins at the early stages. The congregation is a plethora of educators, academia, families, with children from infancy to college, and transients. The researchers' passion for education explains his direct involvement in the church's school, and the place of his context.

The Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center is designed to meet the needs of social, emotional, and academic development of children birth through kindergarten (infancy through five years of age) by instilling in them a strong Christian foundation. Because the researcher believes children should begin the learning process immediately, his long range goal is best stated, "If we hold that Christian faith and life is the means whereby God restores fallen men to fellowship with Himself and to life of highest possible human fulfillment, then we must affirm other truths."[156] Evans and Kennedy cited Freire's philosophy on education and liberation when he stated, "education in the service of liberation could dislodge students from intellectual status and rigid conformity to the status-quo."[157]

With this in mind, the researcher proposes the concept of liberation and education based on a biblical perspective which would best prepare parents to train children to be respectful, productive, and successful students and citizens. The researcher believes education is liberating for both the parent and child. This can be viewed in the experience of Paulo Freire who was born in Brazil. He believed that education was the best hope for "the promotion of social justice and the gradual transformation of an unjust society."[158]

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[156]Ibid., 16.

[157]Edward St. John, "Integrating Liberation Theology Into Restructuring: Toward a Model for Urban Catholic Schools," *A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 2, no. 3 (1999), 265-280.

[158]Ibid., 266.

This, the researcher believes can be accomplished by first understanding the meaning of liberation and education. Freire explains the "challenge for urban educators involves reflecting critically on educational practice as a process of social justice, educating for liberation of the child and family, rather than merely conveying content. While holding an authentic attitude toward the poor and their liberation is compatible with Jesus' teaching."[159]

Liberation can be defined as the reaction or the result of being informed. Liberation comes from teaching. Education is a way to liberation. Knowledge brings about freedom. Daniel Payne believed that "Knowledge was power."[160] Even being exiled Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had worth with the capacity of education.

Dr. Terry Thomas states, Africans have always seen God as a liberator. Thomas wrote:

> The attempts and failures of the white churches however did not prevent the enslaved Africans from authenticating their selfhood. Regardless of the views held by the supporters of the slave system, including white churches, the enslaved Africans knew that their God had not created them to be slaves. Their God was a liberator. The enslaved Africans identified themselves with the liberating God of the Old Testament and the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. The understanding of themselves, through the relationship with their God and their culture, would not allow their minds to be confounded by the society that had enslaved them, supported to a large extent by white theology…[161]

William Paul Quinn understood the meaning of liberation. Before being elected a Bishop, he was a missionary. He won the hearts of the people through his efforts of liberation.

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[159]Edward St. John. "Integrating Liberation Theology Into Restructuring: Toward a Model for Urban Catholic Schools," *A Journal of Inquiry and Practice2, no. 3* (1999), 265-280.

[160]Bishop, 10.

[161]Terry Thomas, "Compassion Ministry" Lecture, (United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, January 19, 2010).

> The driving force in Quinn's far-reaching mission was his motto: "I have seen the affliction of my people" (Ex 3:7). He identified his mission with that of Jesus as expressed in Luke 4:18. He thought of his task as that "of preaching the gospel to the poor, of binding up the broken-hearted, of declaring liberty to the captives, and of giving sight to the blind." With a keen sense of his divine mission, Quinn traveled extensively on horseback. His journey took him from town to town, valley to valley, through woods and over mountains. Wherever he went, he drew large crowds by his eloquence. His reputation as a preacher grew to such an extent that when he arrived in a neighborhood, black and white flocked to hear him. Scoffers were convicted of their errors and sought the way to salvation. Converts were made and mission churches were started. B. W. Arnett, commenting on his mission and ministry, said he was a "burning and shining light.[162]

In the article written by Kay S. Hymowitz, *What's Holding Black Kids Back?* She states, "Forty years after the War on Poverty began, thirty percent of Black children are still living in poverty. Those children face an even chance of dropping out of school, according to economist Thomas Hertz, and 42 percent chance of staying in the lowest income decline."[163]

While Christian schools are distinguished from public schools, the researcher believes the process of transforming the future of children requires serious reflection on a belief system, which can provide liberation for our parent/children through education. The researcher further believes a systematic approach to early learning that is effective requires a biblical foundation. The researcher is mindful of the fact that parents are left to deal with the disappointment of their child who has failed to graduate, and later are unable to find employment to take care of them. Therefore, the researcher begins to look at the important role of the parent in the child's education. Parents and families are charged with giving their children the information and knowledge needed in order to be

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[162]Champion, *The Pastor's Manuel, 171.*

[163]Kay S. Hymowitz, *What's Holding Black Kids Back?* www.city-journal.org. (accessed August 2011).

successful. In other words, education is not merely an exercise of the mind or something to be measured by an aptitude test; it is also a means by which someone learns the proper way to live in society. For parents Douglas Wilson states:

> Parents should see the work of the Christian school as a supplement to their own teaching, enabling the parents to be even more effective in their time with their children. The parents are the ones given charge to educate, train, and instruct their children. That responsibility cannot be handed over to an institution. [164]

In her article, "What's Holding Black Kids Back?" Kay S. Hymowitz, referred to Bill Cosby in his town hall meetings stated the problem as being "we don't need another federal commission to study the problem...what we need now are parents sitting down with children, overseeing homework, sending children off to school in the morning, well fed, rested, and ready to learn."[165]

Overall, the researcher believes a biblical approach to early education is the best since no one lives in a vacuum. He believes whether good or bad love is central to the health of a child. Eric Fromm in his book, *The Art of Loving* asserts that "love for others and love for ourselves, are not mutually exclusive."[166] Jesus implied the same in His command, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself."[167]

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[164]Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 11.

[165]Kay S. Hymowitz, *What's Holding Black Kids Back*? www.city-journal.org. (accessed August 2011).

[166]Eric Fromm. *The Art of Loving* (New York, NY: Harper Press, 1965), 58.

[167]Mt 22:37-39 (NIV).

True liberation comes through Jesus Christ. Every child that understands and accepts the love of Jesus can be liberated.

> This radical liberation is the gift, which Christ offers us. By his death and resurrection he redeems us from sin and all its consequences, as has been well said in a text we quote again: 'It is the same God who, in the fullness of time, sends his Son in the flesh, so that he might come to liberate all men from all slavery to which sin has subjected them: hunger, misery, oppression, and ignorance, in a word, that injustice and hatred which have their origin in human selfishness.[168]

St. Stephen Child Care & Learning Center not only seeks to educate but also seeks to help children become aware of the liberation that comes through Jesus Christ.

In reference to this project, the researcher believes Jesus valued children highly. Clark and Brubaker points out "Jesus attributed faith and belief to the children who played in His presence and found themselves on His lap and in His stories. Their open credulity became the analogy of commitment to His discipleship. Yet He did not call them to discipleship or chide them for unbelief or draw the net for their conversion. He accepted them at their stage of development for what they were, He saw beyond that to their potential as full-grown creatures made in the image of God."[169]

The researcher as a disciple of Jesus Christ set out to make changes in the early life of children. When we do, the researcher believes one is able to create an educational environment for children in which, "show respect for their value to God, in appropriate ways, affirm their childlike faith, and develop a rich display of faithful adherence to the

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[168]Gutierrez, 103.

[169]Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker and Roy B. Zuck, *Childhood Education in the Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 26.

traditions, values, beliefs, and life-styles which are thoroughly and honestly Christian."[170] The passage from Deuteronomy 4: 5-10 is used by the researcher to support this thought.

> Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me that you should act according to them in the land, which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' "For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren, [1]especially concerning the day you stood before the Lord your God in Horeb, when the Lord said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.[171]

This passage also undergirds the researcher personal journey and life mission, liberation of families through mutual respect for each other, and a responsibility to trust and obey God's instruction and guidance, which is always connected to His love.

The Story of Moses

The story of Moses begins after Israel has been in Egypt 400 years. They increased in population, which brought concern to the Egyptians; therefore Pharaoh ordered "every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."[172] Moses escaped this fate because his mother "placed the child in a basket and put it among

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[170]Ibid., 13.

[171]Dt 4:5-10.

[172]Ex1:22.

the reeds along the bank of the Nile."[173] Pharaoh's daughter withdrew him from the river and gave him an Egyptian name, Moses, which means, to draw from water. His sister who had been watching from a distance, offered to help Pharaoh's daughter find a nurse for him, which would be his mother, Jochebed.

The researcher asserts it was God's plan for Moses to not only bond with his mother, but also instill in him the guiding principles of faith in God. Just maybe Moses mother telling him stories about Abraham and Sarah, Joseph the dreamer, sang spiritual songs to him would influence his future and sensitivity to the presence of God. He no longer is a prince of and recognized leader of Egypt because of God's intervention he becomes what God had planned for him from the beginning, a liberator.

In the same way, the researchers' plans to pursue a military career are circumvented by the God in which he becomes a liberator and educator for God's people. The researcher believes that an environmental change for people in bondage is not sufficient to bring lasting results just as it did not for the children of Israel. Moses liberated the children of Israel from Egypt but it did nothing to liberate them spiritually. After their liberation, the child of Israel received from God instructions on how to stay free from bondage. The commandments for them to follow were etched in stone, Exodus 20:3-17;

1. You shall have no other gods before me
2. You shall make no graven images
3. You shall not take the Lord's name in vain

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[173]Ex 2:3.

4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy
5. Honor your father and your mother
6. No killing
7. No adultery
8. No stealing
9. Do not bear false witness against your neighbor
10. Do not covet[174]

In accordance to church tradition and the researcher, congregants hear the same instructions every Sunday. Although like Moses he experiences the same frustration with the congregants' failure to incorporate God's Word in their everyday life. The researcher can relate to Moses who too obtained strength from a trust in God's redemptive power to transform lives. So, when looking at Moses, the researcher sees liberation as a necessary first step to biblical knowledge and spiritual transformation.

When looking at Jesus, the researcher comprehends that Jesus did not ignore the relevance of God's law when He began teaching. He challenged the cultural thinking and the keepers of the law to demonstrate genuine love. The researcher believes also that love is the key to change. And this change has to begin at infancy. A child will learn different kinds of "love and ways of expressing it, even though an introduction to it is through the mother or through someone else who cares for the infant."[175] Thomas A. Harris comments, "We do not learn to love if we have never been loved. If the first five years of

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[174]Ex 20:3-17.

[175]Carter

life consist totally of a critical struggle for physical and psychological survival, this struggle is likely to persist throughout life."[176] Therefore, to minimize further struggles in life, the researcher suggest Deuteronomy 4:5-10 as a directive for all to follow. That is, the researcher adherence to obedience to God's law means freedom. Additionally, the researcher believes obedience to God's commandments is meant to shape our lives through knowledge. That is, knowledge and obedience to God should be evident in our lives. Comparatively, the teaching of God, wherein both become liberators, influences the story of Samuel of similar to Moses early life. John Maxwell describes Samuel as one of the most influential prophets of his day. 1 Samuel 3:19-20, "So Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the Lord. Then the Lord appeared again in Shiloh. For the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord."[177]

Similarly, the researcher was raised to know God in his home to obey not only his parents but also the commandments of God. After receiving his commission to preach the gospel, the researcher like Samuel began revealing to God's people through the preached Word that God taught him. The researcher believes that knowledge of God and a trust in God is the sign of a leader. Another biblical example of leadership is Samuel who learned to hear from God, take heed to His words, and then speak His truth regardless of the any present situation. Samuel's success began when he was just a boy, under his mentor Eli. God spoke to Samuel during the night, and then the lad spoke for God to Eli.

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[176]Thomas A. Harris, *I'm Ok-You're Ok* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1969), 103.

[177]1 Sm 3:19-21 (NKJV).

Despite the hardness of God's message to Eli, Samuel spoke the truth in love. This encounter began a long pattern for Samuel. Soon, the Israelites sought out Samuel to speak words of direction for their future. They needed help to retrieve the Ark of the Covenant. They needed strategy against their enemy, the Philistines.[178]

The researcher comprehends Samuel's leadership style as a mutual leadership approach in that he identified with the people and could be both tough and tender because of this relationship with God. People listened because of this relationship. In the article, "Transformational Leadership," Rich Blue, states, "in transformational leadership, the emphasis is on relationships characterized by mutuality and the desire to multiply influence and effectiveness."[179]

Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio in their book "*Transformational Leadership*, also state, "transformational leadership involves inspiring followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problems solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support."[180] This relates to the researchers approach in which he concentrates more on developing relationships with the parents and educators to challenge them become Christian leaders in their own context. Samuel's leadership is what C. S. Lewis states "we might think that God wanted simply obedience to a set of

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[178]John Maxwell, *Samuel: The Most Influential Leader of His Day* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc. 2007), 338.

[179]Rich Blue, *Transformational Leadership*. www.transformleadership.org. (accessed September 2012).

[180]Barnard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership* (Mahwah, NJ:: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2006), 4.

rules; whereas He really wants people of a particular sort. And the sort of people that God wants are those who hope to conform themselves to the very character of God."[181]

Life of Timothy

According to Clark and Brubaker the New Testament states virtually nothing about what or how to teach children. Ephesians 6:1 states, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."[182] Then in Ephesians 6:4, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."[183] Bishops, deacons, and elders are to be faithful and successful in the rearing of their own children which is read in 1 Timothy 3:4, "He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect."[184]

Ernest Simon asserts the following, "The Jewish people almost alone, of all the ancient nations, provided for the universal schooling of its children. The earliest historical evidence to support this contention as of the first century B.C.E. can be found in the Palestinian Talmud (ca. 400 CE). Later complementary evidence as of the year 66 C.E. can be found in the Babylonian Talmud (ca. 500 CE) as well as supporting statements by Flavius Josephus. The underlying motive for this legislation and practice has been the concept of Torah, i.e., the divine law and lore, the study of which was the religious duty of the highest order, not only for priests and scholars, but for the ordinary Jew as well."[185]

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[181]Kendel Christensen, *Mere Christianity* www.kendelc.com. (accessed August 1, 2011).

[182]Eph 6:1.

[183]Eph 6:4.

[184]1 Tm 3:4.

[185]Simon, 190-205.

Thomas D. Lea addresses the matter thusly, "Education for Palestinian Jews at the time of Christ would have involved education from a Rabbi among young males, while females would have only learned home skills from their mothers, but in the Greek world of the Roman Empire education was available for both boys and girls until the age of eighteen."[186] The New Testament character, which further supports the tradition of early education influence and Jewish teachings, is best seen in the story of Timothy.

> Timothy was the child of Eunice and his grandmother name was Lois. Timothy was a third-generation Christian and companion of Paul. Timothy, Timotheus, Τιμόθεος, 2 Timothy 1:5 (NIV). Paul pointed to the genuine work of God in Timothy's life as a basis for his gratitude. First, he commended Timothy's faith as sincere ("genuine," Williams). The faith to which Paul referred was a faith in the God of the Old Testament who had revealed himself in Jesus. Like Timothy the researcher's trust in Jesus had led him to faithfulness in action. Second, Paul commended the spiritual heritage Timothy had received. This faith in the God of the Bible had first lived in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Their faith was the expression of the faith of a true Jew (Rom 2:28–29), which found its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The pair had a genuine expectant faith for the Messiah of the Old Testament. When they heard the gospel, they believed upon Jesus Christ as the Messiah for whom they had hoped. They passed their faith on to Timothy. Paul was tracing the faith of Timothy back to its roots. Third, Paul declared that he was certain of the reality of Timothy's faith. The expression *I am persuaded* ("I am sure," NASB) employs a Greek perfect tense that implies that Paul was thoroughly convinced. Paul did not state what reminded him of Timothy's sincere faith, but the expression suggests that some act from outside Paul had prompted his memory.[164]

In regards to the life of Paul and Timothy, the researcher can relate to being a mentee and a mentor. This further supports the researchers' belief that a mentorship approach of mutuality and responsibility, along with a message of instructions and guidance, based on love will encourage parents to be Christian leaders in the home.

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[186]Lea and Black, 39.

For the purpose of this project, the researcher will focus on two points: the early teachings of Timothy and Timothy as a mentee.

Additionally, we find Paul following a former tradition of instruction. He, Paul instructs Timothy to follow his example and to study in order that no one could invalidate the quality of his childhood education. He reminded him that his fidelity to the faith of his mother's would fortify him throughout the various anticipatory challenges that he would no doubt face both in his efforts to practice his faith and teaching others to do likewise. Like Paul, the researcher as Pastor encouraged the educators to reflect on their own spiritual journey to creatively introduce Biblical concepts to children from infancy to five years of age. Comparatively to Paul, the researcher refers to himself as a teacher, pastor, leader, educator, like Paul who had multitudes titles, such as Pharisee, Apostle, and preacher, like Timothy and the researchers educators they would understand the mutuality of trust and their first responsibility is to serve as leaders too.

What religious education did exist in Jewish synagogues is not alluded to, and there is not much as a hint that Christians made any arrangements for the religious instruction of their outside of the home."[187] The researcher suggests this makes sense in the narrative stories of Joseph and Daniel. Both were educated and able to read and write. The biblical text does not specifically give an account as to who taught them.

Erik Erikson provides a model that he says Christians can model when he says, infants waver in the balance between an orientation of trust versus shame and doubt; that by school age, they are caught between the tension of a life-orientation of initiative over against guilt; that the elementary years are predominantly fought out pitting industry

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[187]Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker and Roy B. Zuck, *Childhood Education in the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 13.

against inferiority; and that when pubescence strikes, they will be wavering between positive identity discovery and role diffusion.[188]

A reflection on the story of Moses, the question may come to mind of how Moses as liberator and educator endured the hardship of the children of Israel's lack of faith, complaints, and unwillingness to maintain fidelity to God's law. Moses had to trust God, trust His promises that God would be with him throughout the journey.

Likewise, the researcher had to do the same, trust God. Many people do not trust in God's law and statutes or have faith that His law will set them apart or rather set them free from the declining social influences of today. The researcher believes those who look to educate children from a spiritual base can learn from Moses leadership. Moses initially responded to the children of Israel's complaints at Meribah with anger and disobedience to God.

Throughout the rest of his leadership, Moses is seen as a patient leader and educator willing to listen to their concerns and continued complaints, and advocating for them through prayer to God. In order to lead God's people, the researcher believes he must first recognize the need for a mutuality of respect. That is, the leader must respect those he is charged to serve. This respect for his leadership needed to be reciprocated. Eventually, for Moses this would become an ongoing struggle.

Then there is the responsibility of trust. Moses had to trust God throughout the process of going before Pharaoh and when he was faced with the dilemma of the Red Sea in front of him and Pharaoh's army pressing from behind. Likewise, the children of Israel's responsibility were to trust Moses, in that he was following the instructions of God. In the same vein, the researcher takes on the responsibility to trust God's instruction

[188]Erik Erikson. *Eight Stages of Man, in Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1950), 219.

Finally, the researcher believes that God has given infants "an immortal soul capable of knowing God."[189] The researcher also believes the most important part of a child's learning process begins at infancy. With this in mind, the researcher believes parents who mutually agree with God that it is their responsibility to follow His instructions based on Proverbs 22: 6, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."[190] The researcher believes Moses and Timothy's early years with their mother certainly influenced their reaction to conflict and most importantly, their openness to God. And so, the church must offer it's very best to provide for their educational needs. "Psychologists and educators agree that never again during the whole life will a person learn fast or as much as he does in these first two years."[191] That is, "the basic values and concepts which one communicated to the infant and toddler are the very ones that will determine the course of the child's life."[192] Because learning is vital, the researcher believes the first five years of a child's life should not be neglected.

"Educationally, the family is the basic school of life, where we continue to learn from each other from infancy to old age and pass our cultural values from one generation to another."[193] The child's personality grows out of all the relationships that touch life. That makes parents, brothers, sisters, teachers, and classmates, with their

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[189] Ibid., 9

[190] Prv 22: 6

[191] James R. Estep, Jr., *A Theology for Christian Education* (Nashville, TN: TN: B & H Publishing Group, 1984), 84.

[192] Ibid.

[193] Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker and Roy B. Zuck, *Childhood Education in the Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 68.

personalities and value systems, part of the child's environment. They give the child a mind-set a sense of direction, a life-purpose, and goals, which will help to sustain a child's thirst for knowledge academically and spiritually. John Roberto in his article, "Best Practices in Family Faith Formation" explains, "Childhood religiosity affects closeness to God. The more people learn to be religious as children, the more likely they are to report experiences of the holy later in life. In other words, the way young people are raised has long-term effects on their ability to experience God in their adult years."[194]

The researcher suggests a mentorship approach which there is mutuality, responsibility, along with a message of instructions will help parents understand the importance of developing spiritual practices in the home, such as meal time prayers, conversations about God, and daily devotions. Although nothing is guaranteed or determined, statistics about parents who hold religious beliefs to be important show that their children will hold religious beliefs to be important.[195]

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[194]John Roberto, *Best Practices in Family Faith Formation.* www.lifelongfaith.org. (accessed September 2012).

[195]Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR
METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the writer seeks to define the process of encouraging parents with children from infancy to five years of age to participate in their child's learning. The writer believes incorporating sound biblical teaching with academic learning will also encourage parents to reinforce in the home what their child experiences at school both academically and spiritually at Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center, Jacksonville, Florida. For the purpose of this project the writer conducted a random sampling of the parents with children from infancy to five years of age. Of particular interest are the single parents who are often overlooked by the church. This model seeks to determine how to help all parents of the school become actively involved in their child's biblical, spiritual and academic learning, especially the single parent, as well as to determine if this will increase faith growth in the home. This mentorship approach will enhance the parent's overall motivation to teach their children about God.

Once results are obtained, the ERS tool becomes a guide that teachers can use to fully implement appropriate learning strategies for the very young. This same information is shared with the parent to create environments within the home setting to ensure continued growth and development of the young learner. The researcher felt that this would help him carry out the mission of developing an appropriate early learning and spiritual environment.

The advisement of professional associates and the project itself has served to inform and challenge the researcher to adjust his research to increase the level of parent participation in the child's spiritual and academic learning within the home. In the development of this project, educators of the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center expressed concerns regarding the continued effectiveness of designing a joint learning plan between the parent and the educator to be practiced in the home. The writer of this project realized that the parents placed greater emphasis on developing a plan for the academic success of the child rather than the spiritual. Therefore, the writer asked the question, will greater emphasis on biblical teaching and practices help parents integrate faith and learning in the home to reinforce what the child learns in school? As a result, this project attempted to meet the expressed needs of both the child and the parents by using effective mentoring approaches to help them develop spiritual practices in the home to increase faith growth and long term spiritual and learning attainment in school.

In working with parents and educators to develop an individual learning and spiritual plan for children from infancy to five years of age, the writer, as pastor recognized he wanted a stronger emphasis for parents to take a participatory role in incorporating biblical teachings within the home setting. The writer's hypothesis is that if parents are given an individual curriculum inclusive of sound biblical teaching, this will reinforce what the child learns in school and increase parent participation in the child's learning. Mentored through intentional biblical instruction, they will develop spiritual practices in the home to reinforce what the child learns in school to impact their academic attainment. The proposed model consisted of parent meetings with the educator to develop an individual learning and spiritual plan for the child, meetings with the mentor,

and a one-day workshop designed to show parents the correlation between their faith and their child's positive learning experiences. The effectiveness of this project was tested using the methodological triangulation method of data analysis. The data retrieved for data analysis was based on the feedback of the parent survey, participation in the workshop, pre and post test questionnaires and specific measures related to parent motivation and involvement.

Making a Spiritual Home Workshop

The Making a Spiritual Home workshop was a one-day event designed to address a new approach to single parents with infants to children five years of age. The approach prepared single parents to understand God's word, their responsibility to train their children according to God's word, and most importantly that children are a gift from God. The workshop also demonstrated what happens when single parents are empowered by a biblical understanding that they are also important to God. For this workshop, the writer concentrated his efforts on providing the parents with activities to help them bond with their children in the body of Christ.

The workshop was divided into two phases. The first hour of the workshop was used as an introduction to show the important role of parents as the primary mentors of faith and learning for their own children. The parents were urged to see themselves in the biblical narrative of Moses and Timothy wherein the early bond had an impact on their lives. The second half of the workshop brought parents and children together for fun and learning. The workshop ended with prayer. The context associates at the beginning of the workshop experience distributed a brief questionnaire to the parents. The context

associate explained the reason for the questionnaire and how to complete the questionnaire. At the end of the workshop the context associate collected the questionnaire for data tabulation. The suggested questions for the workshop were:

1) What are the concerns that motivate you to care about your child's academic and spiritual life?
2) What are the dreams you harbor for them?
3) What is the nature of your own spiritual journey?
4) How important is it for parents to assume responsibility to teach their children about God in the home?
5) Can you see yourself being empowered by God as a spiritual leader in your home? If so, please indicate.

The writer sought to find common responses for each question and comment that speak to the workshop objectives. The writer analyzed the questionnaire; inferences and conclusions were drawn regarding the overall responses of the project participants.

The preferred method of developing Christian leaders as seen in the lives of Jesus, Moses, Paul, and Timothy is mentorship. Thus, the researcher suggests a mentoring relationship would be effective in offering parents insights and ideas for nurturing the faith of their children in the home, and more importantly participate in their child's learning.

Before the project begins, an invitation was extended by the researcher to invite parents with children from infancy to five years of age. The participants were asked to sign a confidentiality form for covenant agreement. There was a pre self-administered survey regarding the participants' present spiritual practices in the first meeting and a post self-administered survey in the last session, regarding their opinion on the effectiveness of such a mentorship program and the newly learned strategies. Data was

extrapolated from these surveys as well as from the researcher's field notes of his observations and the reflexive journals that the participants were asked to keep. Giving each participant a fictional name protected his or her identity.

During the first meeting with the writer as mentor, spirituality, and spiritual practices were defined. The writer explained the process to be used to developing an individual learning and spiritual plan for each child. The writer also gave the parents a synopsis of education and the significance of Christian education. A brief summation of the biblical narrative of Moses and Timothy was given by the researcher to present a biblical model of mentorship and early exposure to spiritual practices in the home. The writer endeavored to get the parents to reflect on their own spiritual journey which more than likely began in the home and to define what impact it has own their daily decisions involving morals.

This writer introduced and discussed the power of journaling for parents. Parents will be given a journal to record their reflections of the child's participation in the selected spiritual and academic focus for the week. At the end of the week, the parents shared the journals with the teacher to determine next steps. The completed journal may be copied and placed in the student's personal portfolio or posted at the school to share with other parents. During special parent meetings, selected parents were invited to share their success with this process. It is the hope of this writer that the parents felt empowered by engaging in journaling.

As parents journal and share their experience, the researcher hope they will understand a mutual agreement with God's instruction for parents to train up their child according to biblical instruction as their spiritual responsibility to God's command.

Additionally, a parent's adherence to God's instruction, based on love, will more than likely have lasting influence on the child/children's future success.

Chapel Service Program

The chapel service was conducted by the children ages two to five years of age to further reinforce what they learn in the classroom with guidance provided by the classroom teacher. This activity is two-fold. It serves to motivate parents to take time to participate in the service with their child. The context associate presided over the workshop, and the writer documented parent participation and response.

Pre and Post Test Questionnaire

Prior to activities in this project, the writer, and the context associates gathered for prayer with the parents to present the project objectives. The context associates helped with the administering of the pre-test. Self-awareness, knowledge and other pertinent data was gained to determine the extent of spiritual practices in the home and its impact on the child/children overall learning. At the conclusion of the project, the parents were given a post-test which consisted of identical questions asked on the pre-test. An analysis of the pre and post-test assisted the writer in determining the overall motivation of the parents.

Methodological Triangulation

Methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple qualitative methods to study project participants. The writer and the context associates analyzed all data to determine the level of understanding, motivation, and commonality from each. If the findings from all of the data display similar conclusions, then validity has been established.

This chapter presented an overview of the methodology, data collection, and specific activities used to encourage parents with children from infancy to five years of age to participate in their child learning. The proceeding chapter will present the research results and a complete analysis of data collected.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPEREINCE

This ministry project was completed with the assistance and participation of a school director/context associate, parents, a staff of eighteen teachers, three environmental coaches, a curriculum coordinator and members of the committee. Diversity was celebrated within all facets of the process based upon the education levels and income ranges of all participants.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire asked the parents and teachers about developmental skills common in daily life. This screening device allowed opportunities for the parent and teacher to rate the child's abilities across nineteen specific surveys based upon the age (s) of the child in five domains of learning (Appendix A).

The results of the pre post measures for the ASQ's from the parents and teachers revealed several differences in the scoring. Of particular importance for this researcher were the differences that existed in the Below Age Expectancy category recorded by the teachers. The researcher met with the teachers to look more closely at the ratings given and to observe each of the children involved. Next steps were identified which involved some referrals being made to outside agencies that partner with the Center for Diagnostic Testing. Academic learning plans were developed for all to set the instructional guide for each student to work towards achievement.

The Voluntary Pre Kindergarten Assessment was selected as the instrument to use with the assessment of our PK4 students for the Pre-Mid and Post testing sessions. Print knowledge, phonological awareness, and oral language/vocabulary are the best predictors for conventional early reading ability. Number sense is one of the best-known informal predictors of later mathematics ability. This assessment provides information to teachers about the children's progress in attaining these skills. The teachers use these results to form instructional decisions in the PK4 classroom (Appendix B).

Forty Pre K students were administered the VPK assessment during the pre test. Of particular interest to this researcher was the number of students who were not yet demonstrating abilities in all of the tested areas. The researcher participated in mentoring sessions with the center director and teachers to compare the results of this test along with that of the ASQ's. Baseline data was established and set the tone for developing student-learning plans. Parents were able to see the correlation that existed in their scores, coupled by the scoring of the teacher and the VPK test results. The academic and spiritual learning plans were developed for implementation at school and home. Teacher made-test is used throughout the school year to determine the progression of student learning outcomes. Results obtained are included in the student's portfolio, discussed with the parent, and celebrated with the students.

The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) are observational assessment tools used to evaluate the quality of early childhood programs. The tools have been internationally tested for reliability and validity in providing information about the quality of childhood programs, based on current research regarding positive child outcomes. To determine the effectiveness of our learning environment, the following protocols were used:

- Infant Toddlers Early Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)
- Early Childhood Environment Rating Systems (ECERS)

Each ERS scale is divided into criteria that assess the program's physical environment, health and safety procedures, materials, interpersonal relationships and opportunities for learning and development.

The use of this information helped this writer to make decisions about what areas of quality would be addressed in the early learning program to ensure appropriate learning strategies were employed. This same information is shared with the parent to create environments within the home setting to ensure continued growth and development of the young learner. Of particular interest to this researcher was the rating received by the Toddler 2 modules. It was apparent that this division of our school needed intensive coaching while focusing on the continuous success of our Nursery, PK3, and PK4 classrooms. To help improve teacher interactions within the Toddler 2 module, staff received intensive instruction and support in establishing quality learning environments using the Infant/Toddler Childhood Environment Rating Scale.

In speaking with parents of students enrolled at the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center, this researcher was very concerned that there was an apparent disconnect about all of the learning expectations of their children. It was clear that they wanted the students to know about God but they were more interested in them knowing their alphabets and numbers and nothing of a spiritual component although enrolled in a Christian school. Additionally, it was the thinking of this researcher that single parents would need more assistance in this area of concern. The Spiritual Questionnaire was developed by this researcher and the members of Saint Stephen African Methodist

Episcopal Church to determine the importance parents placed on the spiritual component of their child and the practice of spirituality within the home (Appendix C).

A cross-random sampling of the parents was engaged in this process. The results were surprising for each of the questions answered. It was evident to this researcher that stronger emphasis needed to be placed engaging parents in activities that would promote the spiritual component within the home as it was being presented in school (Appendix).

Mid-term testing was conducted during the month of January to determine if desired results were being obtained. The ASQ's and VPK assessments were re-administered and it was determined that adequate progress was being made. Learning plans for the students were reviewed and next steps were determined. Parent-teacher conferences were held at which time the parents were invited to share their journals during the conference.

This writer researcher and members of Saint Stephen made a review of the Infant/Toddler classes. The staff and students were celebrated for their accomplishments at the mid-year.

Post testing of the ASQ's was administered during the third week in May (Appendix D). Once again the parents and teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire covering nineteen specific surveys. The VPK assessment was also administered. This researcher is happy to report that the parents and the teachers scored the children in like manner. Of particular importance are the two students who were functioning below age expectancy. These students and their parents were referred to Child Find for additional diagnostic testing to further assess their learning needs. They

continue their enrollment with us as we continue our support to them as they move through this process.

The posttest results of the VPK testing indicated that all of our students in the PK4 classes were prepared for entry into Kindergarten. The post-test results of the Environmental Rating Scales (Appendix F) showed that the environment of our school was in a state of continuous progress. While improvement within the ITERS division of the school was obtained, this writer researcher is continuing with the mentoring of the staff of the school for more improvement. The progress made within the ECERS environment was considered outstanding by this writer researcher and was noted as such.

The comparison of the post-test data with that of the pre test data shows an increase in parental support for both academic and spiritual learning. The writer researcher was able to celebrate the increased parental involvement, academic success, and spiritual growth of the students and the parents involved in the study. Continuous review and implementation of the program will continue.

CHAPTER SIX

REFELCTION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The hypothesis of this ministry project was to develop an effective spiritual and academic learning environment for children birth to kindergarten while also assisting parents in reinforcing the learning that occurs at the school within the home setting. The opportunities for parent participation in their child's learning experience at the school involved the following:

- Parent and Educator Workshops and Trainings
- Making a Spiritual Home Workshop
- Weekly Chapel Services
- Ages & Stages Questionnaire
- Environmental Rating Scales
- Spiritual Questionnaires
- Journaling

The writer researcher actively participated in all phases of the assessment and trainings. The writer researcher discovered that parents enjoyed reflecting and sharing their experiences relative to developing their child's learning plans and were overjoyed with the spiritual growth they witnessed within their child and themselves. In addition to spiritual growth, the parents could witness first-hand the growth in their child/children's

academic abilities. The parents were overwhelmingly surprised at the rate of academic increase their child/children had experienced. All of the parents reported that the parent educator meetings assisted them greatly in helping them feel a part and assume joint responsibility in the learning process. This was key to this writer researcher in that it helped to validate the thinking that the most effective approach to building this program successfully was through the mentorship process.

It helped this writer researcher to understand how to make a difference in the lives of people. As the writer researcher reflected over this project, he was reminded of Bishop Payne's quote: *"So high a mission, so Holy a calling."* Even though the writer believes based on the results received that this project was and is successful, there is still work to be done. When this writer researcher thinks about the author, Jawnaza Kunjufu… "We want to help Black children, but choose to compromise for financial expediency," his heart bleeds. When this writer researcher thinks about Jesus and His instructions to the disciples, to not get into the way of the little children, but allow them to come unto Him, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; he receives a fresher anointing to do more. Again, even though we have been successful at training and educating our children and their parents through academic and spiritual learning at Saint Stephen, this writer researcher still believes there is much work to be done.

This belief is evident at every pre-kindergarten and kindergarten graduation we have. It is more evident when this writer researcher is able to sit in a high school graduation ceremony and look at the children who were blessed to walk across the stage, and to realize that for as many who were able to graduate, there are those who were lost along the way. Therefore, it is the desire of the writer to continue to boost school

readiness and even add additional school grades to the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center.

Throughout America there is still the cry for our children to be educated as soon as possible. This writer researcher still feels the calling on his life to do more in helping to deliver the children and their families and provide a sense of hope for the future. This writer researcher joins those who have forged the way in knowing that a conscious effort should continue to liberate God's children. This writer researcher firmly believes that the economics of meeting the biblical mandate begins with helping parents to understand the power of investing time, talent and treasure appropriately to help them meet this mandate to save our children.

This writer researcher will continue the work that has been placed before him. With the help of God, leading and guiding every step of the way, the writer researcher will be able to lead the people of Saint Stephen by adding additional grade levels to the school to increase the opportunities for children to attend and learn. Parents will be empowered to understand the power of providing spiritual training along with appropriate academic strategies to increase their children's learning gains. The school will continue in a state of continuous academic improvement as it moves forward.

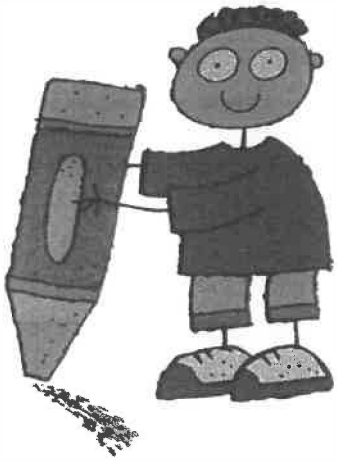
This writer researcher is grateful to God and the people of Saint Stephen for entrusting him with this work. This trust allows this writer researcher to offer true praise and worship in the singing of his favorite hymn of the church #242—A Charge To Keep I Have, A.M.E. Hymnal—lifting up that second verse which states: *"To serve this present age, my calling to fulfill, Oh may it all my power engage to do my Master's will"* To God be all glory, honor and praise. Through the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning

Center this project has been able to boost school readiness by integrating spiritual and academic components. The project has moved from theory to practice. It works.

APPENDIX A

AGES AND STAGES WORKSHOP

AGES & STAGES/MAKING A SPIRITUAL HOME WORKSHOP for PARENTS & TEACHERS



August 18, 2011
9:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.
in the Multi-Purpose Room.

Come learn what your child
should be doing/saying, when, and why!
Understand the importance of our
consent forms.
How to replicate spiritual learning in the home.

Workshops will be led by
Early Learning Coalition Coaches
Cheryl G. Parker, Director
Reverend Michael L, Mitchell, CEO
Light refreshments will be provided.

AGES & STAGES/MAKING A SPIRITUAL HOME WORKSHOP
for
PARENTS & TEACHERS

AGENDA

Early Bird Sign-In	Workshop Participants
Call to Order/Devotions and Presentation of Staff	Cheryl G. Parker, Director
Greetings and Overview of Program Operations	Reverend Michael L. Mitchell, CEO
TEAM - "Together Everyone Achieves More": Making Home and School More Alike Than Different"	
Developing Academic and Spiritual Rituals and Routines in the home	
Biblical Foundations for Learning	
Journaling Activity	
Review of Ages and Stages Questionnaire	Mrs. Parker
"40% ITERS/ECERS Environment - What Is It?	George Robinson Marie Niese
Early Learning Coalition Coaches	
Review of Policy Handbook	Reverend Mitchell/Mrs. Parker
Question and Answer Session	Workshop Participants
Classroom Visitations	Parents
Light Refreshments	
Adjournment	

APPENDIX B

PARENT'S JOURNAL

Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center

Parent's Journal

This journal was designed for parents to record the daily activities of your child during the evening hours within the home. Our goal is to strengthen the parent's role in educating children both spiritually and academically.

Enjoy your evening with your child.

Reverend Michael L. Mitchell, CEO
Cheryl G. Parker, Director

Child's Name: _____

Week of: _____

Spiritual Learning

Day of Week	Prayer	Bible Verse	Bible Story
Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thur			
Fri			

Reflections: (Please describe your child's reaction to this learning experience. What are your thoughts? Are you incorporating lessons learned from the spiritual aspect your discipline, social and or academic training of your child?

Academic Learning
Language/Reading/Spelling

Day of Week	Letter Recognition	Letter Sounds	Reading	Spelling
Mon				
Tues				
Wed				
Thurs				
Fri				

Math/Colors

Day of Week	Number Recognition	Number Counting	Addition Subtraction	Colors
Mon				
Tues				
Wed				
Thurs				
Fri				

Reflections - Please record your child's reaction to this learning experience. Do you need additional help with the reinforcement of skills? Please write and let us know.

Biblical Mandate

Proverbs 22:6 teaches us to "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Please join us in achieving this biblical mandate from God by helping your child be all that he or she can be. Together, let us make home and school the best learning environments ever.

APPENDIX C

PRE/POST SPIRITUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

PRE/POST SPIRITUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: You are requested to read each question listed and select the answer that best represents your feelings relative to the statement.

Please place a check mark to indicate your status:

_____ Married _____ Divorced _____ Single

1. It is important for parents to assume spiritual leadership roles in the home.
    - o Strongly Agree
    - o Agree
    - o Neutral
    - o Disagree
    - o Strongly Disagree
2. It is important for parents to have spiritual rituals and routines for children in the home.
    - o Strongly Agree
    - o Agree
    - o Neutral
    - o Disagree
    - o Strongly Disagree
3. As a parent, I can see that having spiritual guidance has as great impact on my child's academic success at the Saint Stephen Child Care & Learning Center.
    - o Strongly Agree
    - o Agree
    - o Neutral
    - o Disagree
    - o Strongly Disagree
4. Attending workshops that focus on the bible will motivate me to teach my child about God.
    - o Strongly Agree
    - o Agree
    - o Neutral
    - o Disagree
    - o Strongly Disagree
5. Having biblical or spiritual resources that can be used in the home to reinforce my child's learning is very important.
    - o Strongly Agree
    - o Agree
    - o Neutral
    - o Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

6. Do you attend church on a regular basis?
   - Yes
   - Sometimes
   - Never
7. If you attend church, do they provide learning materials to equip your faith practices at home?
   - Yes
   - Sometimes
   - Never
8. Do you believe the bible is important to providing a proper foundation and motivation for training your child?
   - Yes
   - Sometimes
   - Never
9. Do you believe the church and school need to offer more support for you as a parent?
   - Yes
   - Sometimes
   - Never
10. Do you believe pastoral guidance will help you make steps for change such as encouragement and accountability to practice faith in the home?
    - Yes
    - Sometimes
    - Never

APPENDIX D

POST TEST DATA OF SPIRITUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

POST TEST DATA OF SPIRITUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. It is important for parents to assume spiritual leadership roles in the home.

PARENTAL CATEGORY	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Married	17	1			
Divorced	5				
Single	17				

2. It is important for parents to have a spiritual rituals and routines for children in the home.

PARENTAL CATEGORY	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Married	14				
Divorced	5				
Single	14	3			

3. As a parent, I can see that having spiritual guidance has a great impact on my child's academic success at the Saint Stephen Childcare & Learning Center.

PARENTAL CATEGORY	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Married	13	4			
Divorced	4	1			
Single	17	6			

4. Attending workshops that focus on the bible will motivate me to teach my child about God.

PARENTAL CATEGORY	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Married	10	7			
Divorced	2	3			
Single	12	5			

5. Having biblical or spiritual resources that can be used in the home to reinforce my child's learning is very important.

PARENTAL CATEGORY	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Married	11	5			
Divorced	5				
Single	15	2			

6. Do you attend church on a regular basis?

PARENTAL CATEGORY	YES	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Married	14	3	
Divorced	5	1	
Single	15	5	

7. If you attend church, do they provide learning materials to equip your faith practices at home?

PARENTAL CATEGORY	YES	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Married	9	7	
Divorced	2	4	
Single	14	5	

8. Do you believe the bible is important to providing a proper foundation and motivation for training your child?

PARENTAL CATEGORY	YES	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Married	10	7	
Divorced	6		
Single	19		

9. Do you believe the church and school need to offer more support for you as a parent?

PARENTAL CATEGORY	YES	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Married	11	6	
Divorced	6		
Single	12	7	

10. Do you believe pastoral guidance will help you make steps for change such as encouragement and accountability to practice faith in the home?

PARENTAL CATEGORY	YES	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Married	5	11	
Divorced	3	2	
Single	16	3	

APPENDIX E

VARIOUS DATA RESULTS

Chart A: ASQ Parent Results September Pre Test

MODULE	NUMBER TESTED	NUMBER BELOW AGE EXPECTANCY	NUMBER AT AGE EXPECTANCY	NUMBER ABOVE AGE EXPECTANCY
Nursery				
Toddler One	18	2	13	3
Toddler Two	44	7	31	6
PK3	45	5	35	5
PK4	40	12	18	12
Kindergarten	25	2	13	10
Total	**180**	**28**	**119**	**37**

Chart B: ASQ Teacher Results September Pre Test

MODULE	NUMBER TESTED	NUMBER BELOW AGE EXPECTANCY	NUMBER AT AGE EXPECTANCY	NUMBER ABOVE AGE EXPECTANCY
Nursery	8	2	6	0
Toddler One	18	6	9	3
Toddler Two	44	10	30	4
PK3	45	10	20	15
PK4	40	15	25	0
Kindergarten	25	5	14	6
Total	**180**	**48**	**104**	**28**

The VPK Assessment Pre- Test Results September (PK4)

Area	Not Yet Demonstrating	Emerging /Progressing	Demonstrating
Print Knowledge	15	20	5
Phonological Awareness	15	20	5
Language/Vocabulary	0	35	5
Number Sense	2	30	8

ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCALES PRE TEST RESULTS SEPTEMBER

MODULE	0.-2.99	3.00-4.99	5.00+
Nursery		X	
Toddler One			X
Toddler Two	X		
PK3		X	
PK4		X	

It should be noted that the Kindergarten class is not considered in this measure.

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